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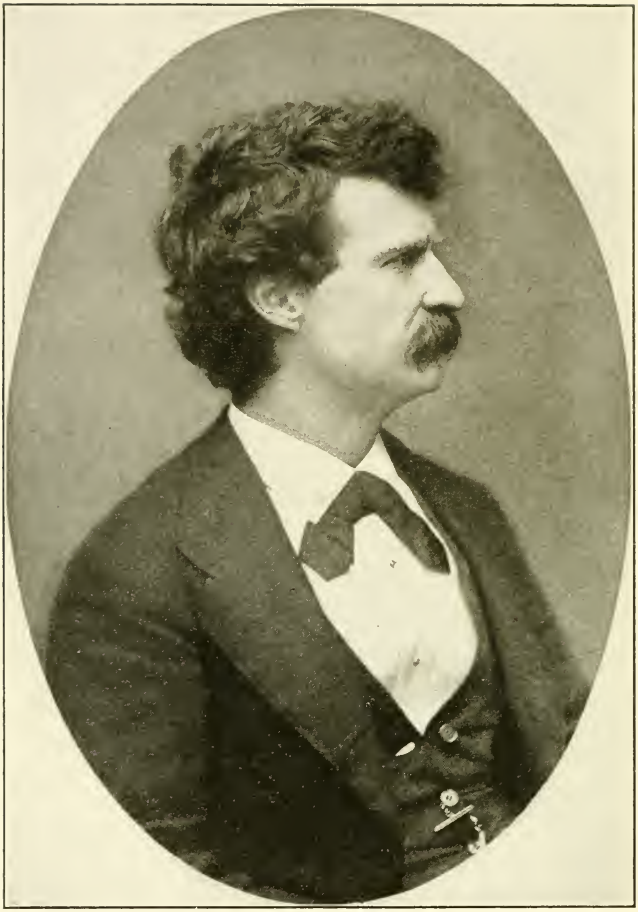
A BIOGRAPHY



S. L. Clemens

SAMUEL LANGHORNE CLEMENS ABOUT 1880

S. L. Clemens

MARK TWAIN

A BIOGRAPHY

THE PERSONAL AND LITERARY LIFE OF
SAMUEL LANGHORNE CLEMENS

BY
ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE

WITH LETTERS, COMMENTS AND INCIDENTAL
WRITINGS HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED; ALSO
NEW EPISODES, ANECDOTES, ETC.

THREE VOLUMES
FULLY ILLUSTRATED

VOLUME II

HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS
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MCMXII

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MARK TWAIN
A BIOGRAPHY

CV

MARK TWAIN AT FORTY

IN conversation with John Hay, Hay said to Clemens:

"A man reaches the zenith at forty, the top of the hill. From that time forward he begins to descend. If you have any great undertaking ahead, begin it now. You will never be so capable again."

Of course this was only a theory of Hay's, a rule where rules do not apply, where in the end the problem resolves itself into a question of individualities. John Hay did as great work after forty as ever before, so did Mark Twain, and both of them gained in intellectual strength and public honor to the very end.

Yet it must have seemed to many who knew him, and to himself, like enough, that Mark Twain at forty had reached the pinnacle of his fame and achievement. His name was on every lip; in whatever environment observation and argument were likely to be pointed with some saying or anecdote attributed, rightly or otherwise, to Mark Twain. "As Mark Twain says," or, "You know that story of Mark Twain's," were universal and daily commonplaces. It was dazzling, towering fame, not of the best or most enduring kind as yet, but holding somewhere within it the structure of immortality.

He was in a constant state of siege, besought by all varieties and conditions of humanity for favors such as only human need and abnormal ingenuity can invent. His ever-increasing mail presented a marvelous exhibition of the human species on undress parade. True, there were hundreds of appreciative tributes from readers who spoke only out of a heart's gratitude; but there were nearly as great a number who came with a compliment, and added a petition, or a demand, or a suggestion, usually unwarranted, often impertinent. Politicians, public speakers, aspiring writers, actors, elocutionists, singers, inventors (most of them he had never seen or heard of) cheerfully asked him for a recommendation as to their abilities and projects.

Young men wrote requesting verses or sentiments to be inscribed in young ladies' autograph albums; young girls wrote asking him to write the story of his life, to be used as a school composition; men starting obscure papers coolly invited him to lend them his name as editor, assuring him that he would be put to no trouble, and that it would help advertise his books; a fruitful humorist wrote that he had invented some five thousand puns, and invited Mark Twain to father this terrific progeny in book form for a share of the returns. But the list is endless. He said once:

"The symbol of the race ought to be a human being carrying an ax, for every human being has one concealed about him somewhere, and is always seeking the opportunity to grind it."

Even P. T. Barnum had an ax, the large ax of advertising, and he was perpetually trying to grind it on Mark Twain's reputation; in other words, trying to get him to write something that would help to popularize "The Greatest Show on Earth."

There were a good many curious letters—letters from humorists, would-be and genuine. A bright man in Duluth sent him an old Allen "pepper-box" revolver with the statement that it had been found among a pile of bones under a tree, from the limb of which was suspended a lasso and a buffalo skull; this as evidence that the weapon was the genuine Allen which Bemis had lost on that memorable Overland buffalo-hunt. Mark Twain enjoyed that, and kept the old pepper-box as long as he lived. There were letters from people with fads; letters from cranks of every description; curious letters even from friends. Reginald Cholmondeley, that lovely eccentric of Condover Hall, where Mr. and Mrs. Clemens had spent some halcyon days in 1873, wrote him invitations to be at his castle on a certain day, naming the hour, and adding that he had asked friends to meet him. Cholmondeley had a fancy for birds, and spared nothing to improve his collection. Once he wrote Clemens asking him to collect for him two hundred and five American specimens, naming the varieties and the amount which he was to pay for each. Clemens was to catch these birds and bring them over to England, arriving at Condover on a certain day, when there would be friends to meet him, of course.

Then there was a report which came now and then from another English castle—the minutes of a certain "Mark Twain Club," all neatly and elaborately written out, with the speech of each member and the discussions which had followed—the work, he found out later, of another eccentric; for there was no Mark Twain Club, the reports being just the mental diversion of a rich young man, with nothing else to do.[1]

Letters came queerly addressed. There is one envelope still in existence which bears Clemens's name in elaborate design and a very good silhouette likeness, the work of some talented artist. "Mark Twain, United States," was a common address; "Mark Twain, The World," was also used; "Mark Twain, Somewhere," mailed in a foreign country, reached him promptly, and "Mark Twain, Anywhere," found its way to Hartford in due season. Then there was a letter (though this was later; he was abroad at the time), mailed by Brander Matthews and Francis Wilson, addressed, "Mark Twain, God Knows Where." It found him after traveling half around the world on its errand, and in his answer he said, "He *did*." Then some one sent a letter addressed, "The Devil Knows Where." Which also reached him, and he answered, "*He* did, too."

---

[1] In *Following the Equator* Clemens combined these two pleasant characters in one story, with elaborations.

Surely this was the farthest horizon of fame.

Countless Mark Twain anecdotes are told of this period, of every period, and will be told and personally vouched for so long as the last soul of his generation remains alive. For seventy years longer, perhaps, there will be those who will relate "personal recollections" of Mark Twain. Many of them will be interesting; some of them will be true; most of them will become history at last. It is too soon to make history of much of this drift now. It is only safe to admit a few authenticated examples.

It happens that one of the oftenest-told anecdotes has been the least elaborated. It is the one about his call on Mrs. Stowe. Twichell's journal entry, set down at the time, verifies it:

Mrs. Stowe was leaving for Florida one morning, and Clemens ran over early to say good-by. On his return Mrs. Clemens regarded him disapprovingly:

"Why, Youth," she said, "you haven't on any collar and tie."

He said nothing, but went up to his room, did up these items in a neat package, and sent it over by a servant, with a line:

"Herewith receive a call from the rest of me."

Mrs. Stowe returned a witty note, in which she said that he had discovered a new principle, the principle of making calls by instalments, and asked whether, in extreme cases, a man might not send his hat, coat, and boots and be otherwise excused.

Col. Henry Watterson tells the story of an after-theater supper at the Brevoort House, where Murat Halstead, Mark Twain, and himself were present. A reporter sent in a card for Colonel Watterson, who was about to deny himself when Clemens said:

"Give it to me; I'll fix it." And left the table. He came back in a moment and beckoned to Watterson.

"He is young and as innocent as a lamb," he said. "I represented myself as your secretary. I said that you were not here, but if Mr. Halstead would do as well I would fetch him out. I'll introduce you as Halstead, and we'll have some fun."

Now, while Watterson and Halstead were always good friends, they were political enemies. It was a political season and the reporter wanted that kind of an interview. Watterson gave it to him, repudiating every principle that Halstead stood for, reversing him in every expressed opinion. Halstead was for hard money and given to flying the "bloody shirt" of sectional prejudice; Watterson lowered the bloody shirt and declared for greenbacks in Halstead's name. Then he and Clemens returned to the table and told frankly what they had done. Of course, nobody believed it. The report passed the *World* night-editor, and appeared next morning. Halstead woke up, then, and wrote a note to the *World*, denying the interview throughout. The *World* printed his note with the added line:

"When Mr. Halstead saw our reporter he had dined."

It required John Hay (then on the *Tribune*) to place the joke where it belonged.

There is a Lotos Club anecdote of Mark Twain that carries the internal evidence of truth. Saturday evening at the Lotos always brought a gathering of the "wits," and on certain evenings—"Hens and chickens" nights—each man had to tell a story, make a speech, or sing a song. On one evening a young man, an invited guest, was called upon and recited a very long poem.

One by one those who sat within easy reach of the various exits melted away, until no one remained but Mark Twain. Perhaps he saw the earnestness of the young man, and sympathized with it. He may have remembered a time when he would have been grateful for one such attentive auditor. At all events, he sat perfectly still, never taking his eyes from the reader, never showing the least inclination toward discomfort or impatience, but listening, as with rapt attention, to the very last line. Douglas Taylor, one of the faithful Saturday-night members, said to him later:

"Mark, how did you manage to sit through that dreary, interminable poem?"

"Well," he said, "that young man thought he had a divine message to deliver, and I thought he was entitled to at least one auditor, so I stayed with him."

We may believe that for that one auditor the young author was willing to sacrifice all the others.

One might continue these anecdotes for as long as the young man's poem lasted, and perhaps hold as large an audience. But anecdotes are not all of history. These are set down because they reflect a phase of the man and an aspect of his life at this period. For at the most we can only present an angle here and there, and tell a little of the story, letting each reader from his fancy construct the rest.

CVI

HIS FIRST STAGE APPEARANCE

ONCE that winter the Monday Evening Club met at Mark Twain's home, and instead of the usual essay he read them a story: "The Facts Concerning the Recent Carnival of Crime in Connecticut." It was the story of a man's warfare with a personified conscience—a sort of "William Wilson" idea, though less weird, less somber, and with more actuality, more verisimilitude. It was, in fact, autobiographical, a setting-down of the author's daily self-chidings. The climax, where conscience is slain, is a startling picture which appeals to most of humanity. So vivid is it all, that it is difficult in places not to believe in the reality of the tale, though the allegory is always present.

The club was deeply impressed by the little fictional sermon. One of its ministerial members offered his pulpit for the next Sunday if Mark Twain would deliver it to his congregation. Howells welcomed it for the *Atlantic*, and published it in June. It was immensely successful at the time, though for some reason it seems to be little known or remembered to-day. Now and then a reader mentions it, always with enthusiasm. Howells referred to it repeatedly in his letters, and finally persuaded Clemens to let Osgood bring it out, with "A True Story," in dainty, booklet form. If the reader does not already know the tale, it will pay him to look it up and read it, and then to read it again.

Meantime *Tom Sawyer* remained unpublished.

"Get Bliss to hurry it up!" wrote Howells. "That boy is going to make a prodigious hit."

But Clemens delayed the book, to find some means to outwit the Canadian pirates, who thus far had laid hands on everything, and now were clamoring at the *Atlantic* because there was no more to steal.

Moncure D. Conway was in America, and agreed to take the manuscript of *Sawyer* to London and arrange for its publication and copyright. In Conway's *Memoirs* he speaks of Mark Twain's beautiful home, comparing it and its surroundings with the homes of Surrey, England. He tells of an entertainment given to Harriet Beecher Stowe, a sort of animated Jarley wax-works. Clemens and Conway went over as if to pay a call, when presently the old lady was rather startled by an invasion of costumed figures. Clemens rose and began introducing them in his gay, fanciful fashion. He began with a knight in full armor, saying, as if in an aside, "Bring along that tinshop," and went on to tell the romance of the knight's achievements.

Conway read *Tom Sawyer* on the ship and was greatly excited over it. Later, in London, he lectured on it, arranging meantime for its publication with Chatto & Windus, thus establishing a friendly business relation with that firm which Mark Twain continued during his lifetime.

Clemens lent himself to a number of institutional amusements that year, and on the 26th of April, 1876, made his first public appearance on the dramatic stage.

It was an amateur performance, but not of the usual kind. There was genuine dramatic talent in Hartford, and the old play of the "Loan of the Lover," with Mark Twain as Peter Spuyk and Miss Helen Smith[1] as Gertrude, with a support sufficient for their needs, gave a performance that probably furnished as much entertainment as that pleasant old play is capable of providing. Mark Twain had in him the making of a great actor. Henry Irving once said to him:

---

[1] Now Mrs. William W. Ellsworth.

"You made a mistake by not adopting the stage as a profession. You would have made even a greater actor than a writer."

Yet it is unlikely that he would ever have been satisfied with the stage. He had too many original literary ideas. He would never have been satisfied to repeat the same part over and over again, night after night from week to month, and from month to year. He could not stick to the author's lines even for one night. In his performance of the easy-going, thick-headed Peter Spuyk his impromptu additions to the lines made it hard on the company, who found their cues all at sixes and sevens, but it delighted the audience beyond measure. No such impersonation of that character was ever given before, or ever will be given again. It was repeated with new and astonishing variations on the part of Peter, and it could have been put on for a long run. Augustin Daly wrote immediately, offering the Fifth Avenue Theater for a "benefit" performance, and again, a few days later, urging acceptance. "Not for one night, but for many."

Clemens was tempted, no doubt. Perhaps, if he had yielded, he would to-day have had one more claim on immortality.

CVII

HOWELLS, CLEMENS, AND "GEORGE"

HOWELLS and Clemens were visiting back and forth rather oftener just then. Clemens was particularly fond of the Boston crowd—Aldrich, Fields, Osgood, and the rest—delighting in those luncheons or dinners which Osgood, that hospitable publisher, was always giving on one pretext or another. No man ever loved company more than Osgood, or to play the part of host and pay for the enjoyment of others. His dinners were elaborate affairs, where the sages and poets and wits of that day (and sometimes their wives) gathered. They were happy reunions, those foregatherings, though perhaps a more intimate enjoyment was found at the luncheons, where only two or three were invited, usually Aldrich, Howells, and Clemens, and the talk continued through the afternoon and into the deepening twilight, such company and such twilight as somehow one seems never to find any more.

On one of the visits which Howells made to Hartford that year he took his son John, then a small boy, with him. John was about six years old at the time, with his head full of stories of Aladdin, and of other Arabian fancies. On the way over his father said to him:

"Now, John, you will see a perfect palace."

They arrived, and John was awed into silence by the magnificence and splendors of his surroundings until they went to the bath-room to wash off the dust of travel. There he happened to notice a cake of pink soap.

"Why," he said, "they've even got their soap painted!"

Next morning he woke early—they were occupying the mahogany room on the ground floor—and slipping out through the library, and to the door of the dining-room, he saw the colored butler, George—the immortal George—setting the breakfast-table. He hurriedly tiptoed back and whispered to his father:

"Come quick! The slave is setting the table!"

This being the second mention of George, it seems proper here that he should be formally presented. Clemens used to say that George came one day to wash windows and remained eighteen years. He was precisely the sort of character that Mark Twain loved. He had formerly been the body-servant of an army general and was typically racially Southern, with those delightful attributes of wit and policy and gentleness which go with the best type of negro character. The children loved him no less than did their father. Mrs. Clemens likewise had a weakness for George, though she did not approve of him. George's morals were defective. He was an inveterate gambler. He would bet on anything, though prudently and with knowledge. He would investigate before he invested. If he placed his money on a horse, he knew the horse's pedigree and the pedigree of the horses against it, also of their riders. If he invested in an election, he knew all about the candidates. He had agents among his own race, and among the whites as well, to supply him with information. He kept them faithful to him by lending them money—at ruinous interest. He buttonholed Mark Twain's callers while he was removing their coats concerning the political situation, much to the chagrin of Mrs. Clemens, who protested, though vainly, for the men liked George and his ways, and upheld him in his iniquities.

Mrs. Clemens's disapproval of George reached the point, now and then, where she declared he could not remain.

She even discharged him once, but next morning George was at the breakfast-table, in attendance, as usual. Mrs. Clemens looked at him gravely:

"George," she said, "didn't I discharge you yesterday?"

"Yes, Mis' Clemens, but I knew you couldn't get along without me, so I thought I'd better stay a while."

In one of the letters to Howells Clemens wrote:

> When George first came he was one of the most religious of men. He had but one fault—young George Washington's. But I have trained him; and now it fairly breaks Mrs. Clemens's heart to hear him stand at that front door and lie to an unwelcome visitor.

George was a fine diplomat. He would come up to the billiard-room with a card or message from some one waiting below, and Clemens would fling his soul into a sultry denial which became a soothing and balmy subterfuge before it reached the front door.

The "slave" must have been setting the table in good season, for the Clemens breakfasts were likely to be late. They usually came along about nine o'clock, by which time Howells and John were fairly clawing with hunger.

Clemens did not have an early appetite, but when it came it was a good one. Breakfast and dinner were his important meals. He seldom ate at all during the middle of the day, though if guests were present he would join them at luncheon-time and walk up and down while they were eating, talking and gesticulating in his fervent, fascinating way. Sometimes Mrs. Clemens would say:

"Oh, Youth, do come and sit down with us. We can listen so much better."

But he seldom did. At dinner, too, it was his habit, between the courses, to rise from the table and walk up and down the room, waving his napkin and talking—talking in a strain and with a charm that he could never quite equal with his pen. It is the opinion of most people who knew Mark Twain personally that his impromptu utterances, delivered with that ineffable quality of speech, manifested the culmination of his genius.

When Clemens came to Boston the Howells household was regulated, or rather unregulated, without regard to former routine. Mark Twain's personality was of a sort that unconsciously compelled the general attendance of any household. The reader may recall Josh Billings's remark on the subject. Howells tells how they kept their guest to themselves when he visited their home in Cambridge, permitting him to indulge in as many unconventions as he chose; how Clemens would take a room at the Parker House, leaving the gas burning day and night, and perhaps arrive at Cambridge, after a dinner or a reading, in evening dress and slippers, and joyously remain with them for a day or more in that guise, slipping on an overcoat and a pair of rubbers when they went for a walk. Also, how he smoked continuously in every room of the house, smoked during every waking moment, and how Howells, mindful of his insurance, sometimes slipped in and removed the still-burning cigar after he was asleep.

Clemens had difficulty in getting to sleep in that earlier day, and for a time found it soothing to drink a little champagne on retiring. Once, when he arrived in Boston, Howells said:

"Clemens, we've laid in a bottle of champagne for you."

But he answered:

"Oh, that's no good any more. Beer's the thing."

So Howells provided the beer, and always afterward had a vision of his guest going up-stairs that night with a pint bottle under each arm.

He invented other methods of inducing slumber as the years went by, and at one time found that this precious boon came more easily when he stretched himself on the bath-room floor.

He was a perpetual joy to the Howells family when he was there, even though the household required a general reorganization when he was gone.

Mildred Howells remembers how, as a very little girl, her mother cautioned her not to ask for anything she wanted at the table when company was present, but to speak privately of it to her. Miss Howells declares that while Mark Twain was their guest she nearly starved because it was impossible to get her mother's attention; and Mrs. Howells, after one of those visits of hilarity and disorder, said:

"Well, it 'most kills me, but it pays," a remark which Clemens vastly enjoyed. Howells himself once wrote:

> Your visit was a perfect ovation for us; we *never* enjoy anything so much as those visits of yours. The smoke and the Scotch and the late hours almost kill us; but we look each other in the eyes when you are gone, and say what a glorious time it was, and air the library, and begin sleeping and longing to have you back again.

CVIII

SUMMER LABORS AT QUARRY FARM

THEY went to Elmira, that summer of '76, to be "hermits and eschew caves and live in the sun," as Clemens wrote in a letter to Dr. Brown. They returned to the place as to Paradise: Clemens to his study and the books which he always called for, Mrs. Clemens to a blessed relief from social obligations, the children to the shady play-places, the green, sloping hill, where they could race and tumble, and to all their animal friends.

Susy was really growing up. She had had several birthdays, quite grand affairs, when she had been brought down in the morning, decked, and with proper ceremonies, with subsequent celebration. She was a strange, thoughtful child, much given to reflecting on the power and presence of infinity, for she was religiously taught. Down in the city, one night, there was a grand display of fireworks, and the hilltop was a good place from which to enjoy it; but it grew late after a little, and Susy was ordered to bed. She said, thoughtfully:

"I wish I could sit up all night, as God does."

The baby, whom they still called "Bay," was a tiny, brown creature who liked to romp in the sun and be rocked to sleep at night with a song. Clemens often took them for extended walks, pushing Bay in her carriage. Once, in a preoccupied moment, he let go of the little vehicle and it started downhill, gaining speed rapidly. He awoke then, and set off in wild pursuit. Before he could overtake the runaway carriage it had turned to the roadside and upset. Bay was lying among the stones and her head was bleeding. Hastily binding the wound with a handkerchief he started full speed with her up the hill toward the house, calling for restoratives as he came. It was no serious matter. The little girl was strong and did not readily give way to affliction.

The children were unlike: Susy was all contemplation and nerves; Bay serene and practical. It was said, when a pet cat died—this was some years later—that Susy deeply reflected as to its life here and hereafter, while Bay was concerned only as to the style of its funeral. Susy showed early her father's quaintness of remark. Once they bought her a heavier pair of shoes than she approved of. She was not in the best of humors during the day, and that night, when at prayer-time her mother said, "Now, Susy, put your thoughts on God," she answered, "Mama, I can't with those shoes."

Clemens worked steadily that summer and did a variety of things. He had given up a novel, begun with much enthusiasm, but he had undertaken another long manuscript. By the middle of August he had written several hundred pages of a story which was to be a continuation of *Tom Sawyer—The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Now, here is a curious phase of genius. The novel which for a time had filled him with enthusiasm and faith had no important literary value, whereas, concerning this new tale, he says:

"I like it only tolerably well, as far as I have gone, and may possibly pigeonhole or burn the manuscript when it is done"—this of the story which, of his books of pure fiction, will perhaps longest survive. He did, in fact, give the story up, and without much regret, when it was about half completed, and let it lie unfinished for years.

He wrote one short tale, "The Canvasser's Story," a burlesque of no special distinction, and he projected for

QUARRY FARM, ELIMRA, N. Y.

GROUP AT FARM ABOUT 1874

the *Atlantic* a scheme of "blindfold novelettes," a series of stories to be written by well-known authors and others, each to be constructed on the same plot. One can easily imagine Clemens's enthusiasm over a banal project like that; his impulses were always rainbow-hued, whether valuable or not; but it is curious that Howells should welcome and even encourage an enterprise so far removed from all the traditions of art. It fell to pieces, at last, of inherent misconstruction. The title was to be, "A Murder and a Marriage." Clemens could not arrive at a logical climax that did not bring the marriage and the hanging on the same day.

The *Atlantic* started its "Contributors' Club," and Howells wrote to Clemens for a paragraph or more of personal opinion on any subject, assuring him that he could "spit his spite" out at somebody or something as if it were a passage from a letter. That was a fairly large permission to give Mark Twain. The paragraph he sent was the sort of thing he would write with glee, and hug himself over in the thought of Howells's necessity of rejecting it. In the accompanying note he said:

> Say, Boss, do you want this to lighten up your old freight-train with? I suppose you won't, but then it won't take long to say so.

He was always sending impossible offerings to the magazines; innocently enough sometimes, but often out of pure mischievousness. Yet they were constantly after him, for they knew they were likely to get a first-water gem. Mary Mapes Dodge, of *St. Nicholas*, wrote time and again, and finally said:

"I know a man who was persecuted by an editor till he went distracted."

In his reading that year at the farm he gave more than customary attention to one of his favorite books, *Pepys'*

Diary, that captivating old record which no one can follow continuously without catching the infection of its manner and the desire of imitation. He had been reading diligently one day, when he determined to try his hand on an imaginary record of conversation and court manners of a bygone day, written in the phrase of the period. The result was *Fireside Conversation in the Time of Queen Elizabeth*, or, as he later called it, *1601*. The "conversation," recorded by a supposed Pepys of that period, was written with all the outspoken coarseness and nakedness of that rank day, when fireside sociabilities were limited only by the range of loosened fancy, vocabulary, and physical performance, and not by any bounds of convention. Howells has spoken of Mark Twain's "Elizabethan breadth of parlance," and how he, Howells, was always hiding away in discreet holes and corners the letters in which Clemens had "loosed his bold fancy to stoop on rank suggestion." "I could not bear to burn them," he declares, "and I could not, after the first reading, quite bear to look at them."

In the *1601* Mark Twain outdid himself in the Elizabethan field. It was written as a letter to that robust divine, Rev. Joseph Twichell, who had no special scruples concerning Shakespearian parlance and customs. Before it was mailed it was shown to David Gray, who was spending a Sunday at Elmira. Gray said:

"Print it and put your name to it, Mark. You have never done a greater piece of work than that."

John Hay, whom it also reached in due time, pronounced it a classic—a "most exquisite bit of old English morality." Hay surreptitiously permitted some proofs to be made of it, and it has been circulated privately, though sparingly, ever since. At one time a special font of antique type was made for it and one hundred copies were taken on hand-made paper. They would easily bring a hundred dollars each to-day.

1601 is a genuine classic, as classics of that sort go. It is better than the gross obscenities of Rabelais, and perhaps, in some day to come, the taste that justified *Gargantua* and the *Decameron* will give this literary refugee shelter and setting among the more conventional writings of Mark Twain. Human taste is a curious thing; delicacy is purely a matter of environment and point of view.[1]

Eighteen hundred and seventy-six was a Presidential year—the year of the Hayes-Tilden campaign. Clemens and Howells were both warm Republicans and actively interested in the outcome, Clemens, as he confessed, for the first time in his life. Before his return to Hartford he announced himself publicly as a Hayes man, made so by Governor Hayes's letter of acceptance, which, he said, "expresses my own political convictions." His politics had not been generally known up to that time, and a Tilden and Hendricks club in Jersey City had invited him to be present and give them some political counsel, at a flag-raising. He wrote, declining pleasantly enough, then added:

"You have asked me for some political counsel or advice: In view of Mr. Tilden's Civil War record my advice is not to raise the flag."

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[1] In a note-book of a later period Clemens himself wrote:

"It depends on who writes a thing whether it is coarse or not. I once wrote a conversation between Elizabeth, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Beaumont, Sir W. Raleigh, Lord Bacon, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, and a stupid old nobleman—this latter being cup-bearer to the queen and ostensible reporter of the talk.

"There were four maids of honor present and a sweet young girl two years younger than the boy Beaumont. I built a conversation which *could* have happened—I used words such as *were* used at that time—1601. I sent it anonymously to a magazine, and how the editor abused it and the sender! But that man was a praiser of Rabelais, and had been saying, 'O that we had a Rabelais!' I judged that I could furnish him one."

He wrote Howells: "If Tilden is elected I think the entire country will go pretty straight to—Mrs. Howells's bad place."

Howells was writing a campaign biography of Hayes, which he hoped would have a large sale, and Clemens urged him to get it out quickly and save the country. Howells, working like a beaver, in turn urged Clemens to take the field in the cause. Returning to Hartford, Clemens presided at a political rally and made a speech, the most widely quoted of the campaign. All papers, without distinction as to party, quoted it, and all readers, regardless of politics, read it with joy.

Yet conditions did not improve. When Howells's book had been out a reasonable length of time he wrote that it had sold only two thousand copies.

"There's success for you," he said. "It makes me despair of the Republic, I can tell you."

Clemens, however, did not lose faith, and went on shouting for Hayes and damning Tilden till the final vote was cast. In later life he changed his mind about Tilden (as did many others) through sympathy. Sympathy could make Mark Twain change his mind any time. He stood for the right, but, above all, for justice. He stood for the wronged, regardless of all other things.

CIX

THE PUBLIC APPEARANCE OF "TOM SAWYER"

CLEMENS gave a few readings in Boston and Philadelphia, but when urged to go elsewhere made the excuse that he was having his portrait painted and could not leave home.

As a matter of fact, he was enjoying himself with Frank Millet, who had been invited to the house to do the portrait and had captured the fervent admiration of the whole family. Millet was young, handsome, and lively; Clemens couldn't see enough of him, the children adored him and added his name to the prayer which included each member of the household—the "Holy Family," Clemens called it.

Millet had brought with him but one piece of canvas for the portrait, and when the first sketch was finished Mrs. Clemens was so delighted with it that she did not wish him to touch it again. She was afraid of losing some particular feeling in it which she valued. Millet went to the city for another canvas and Clemens accompanied him. While Millet was doing his shopping it happened to occur to Clemens that it would be well to fill in the time by having his hair cut. He left word with a clerk to tell Millet that he had gone across the street. By and by the artist came over, and nearly wept with despair when he saw his subject sheared of the auburn, gray-sprinkled aureola that had made his first sketch a success. He tried it again, and the result was an excellent likeness, but it never satisfied Millet.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer appeared late in December (1876), and immediately took its place as foremost of American stories of boy life, a place which it unquestionably holds to this day. We have already considered the personal details of this story, for they were essentially nothing more than the various aspects of Mark Twain's own boyhood. It is only necessary to add a word concerning the elaboration of this period in literary form.

From every point it is a masterpiece, this picture of boy life in a little lazy, drowsy town, with all the irresponsibility and general disreputability of boy character coupled with that indefinable, formless, elusive something we call boy conscience, which is more likely to be boy terror and a latent instinct of manliness. These things are so truly portrayed that every boy and man reader finds the tale fitting into his own remembered years, as if it had grown there. Every boy has played off sick to escape school; every boy has reflected in his heart Tom's picture of himself being brought home dead, and gloated over the stricken consciences of those who had blighted his young life; every boy—of that day, at least—every normal, respectable boy, grew up to "fear God and dread the Sunday-school," as Howells puts it in his review.

As for the story itself, the narrative of it, it is pure delight. The pirate camp on the island is simply boy heaven. What boy, for instance, would not change any other glory or boon that the world holds for this:

> They built a fire against the side of a great log twenty or thirty steps within the somber depths of the forest, and then cooked some bacon in the frying-pan for supper, and used up half of the corn "pone" stock they had brought. It seemed glorious sport to be feasting in that wild, free way in the virgin forest of an unexplored and uninhabited island, far from the haunts of men, and they said they never would return to civilization. The climbing fire lit up their faces and threw its ruddy glare

upon the pillared tree-trunks of their forest-temple, and upon the varnished foliage and the festooning vines.

There is a magic in it. Mark Twain, when he wrote it, felt renewed in him all the old fascination of those days and nights with Tom Blankenship, John Briggs, and the Bowen boys on Glasscock's Island. Everywhere in *Tom Sawyer* there is a quality, entirely apart from the humor and the narrative, which the younger reader is likely to overlook. No one forgets the whitewashing scene, but not many of us, from our early reading, recall this delicious bit of description which introduces it:

> The locust-trees were in bloom, and the fragrance of the blossoms filled the air. Cardiff Hill, beyond the village and above it, was green with vegetation, and it lay just far enough away to seem a delectable land, dreamy, reposeful, and inviting.

Tom's night visit home; the graveyard scene, with the murder of Dr. Robinson; the adventures of Tom and Becky in the cave—these are all marvelously invented. Literary thrill touches the ultimate in one incident of the cave episode. Brander Matthews has written:

> Nor is there any situation quite as thrilling as that awful moment in the cave when the boy and girl are lost in the darkness, and when Tom suddenly sees a human hand bearing a light, and then finds that the hand is the hand of Indian Joe, his one mortal enemy. I have always thought that the vision of the hand in the cave in *Tom Sawyer* was one of the very finest things in the literature of adventure since Robinson Crusoe first saw a single footprint in the sand of the sea-shore.

Mark Twain's invention was not always a reliable quantity, but with that eccentricity which goes with any attribute of genius, it was likely at any moment to rise supreme. If to the critical, hardened reader the tale seems a shade overdone here and there, a trifle extravagant in its delineations, let him go back to his first long-ago reading of it and see if he recalls anything but his pure delight in it then. As a boy's story it has not been equaled.

Tom Sawyer has ranked in popularity with *Roughing It.* Its sales go steadily on from year to year, and are likely to continue so long as boys and girls do not change, and men and women remember.[1]

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[1] Col. Henry Watterson, when he finished *Tom Sawyer*, wrote:

"I have just laid down *Tom Sawyer*, and cannot resist the pressure. It is immense! I read every word of it, didn't skip a line, and nearly disgraced myself several times in the presence of a sleeping-car full of honorable and pious people. Once I had to get to one side and have a cry, and as for an internal compound of laughter and tears there was no end to it. . . . The 'funeral' of the boys, the cave business, and the hunt for the hidden treasure are as dramatic as anything I know of in fiction, while the pathos—particularly everything relating to Huck and Aunt Polly—makes a cross between Dickens's skill and Thackeray's nature, which, resembling neither, is thoroughly impressive and original."

CX

MARK TWAIN AND BRET HARTE WRITE A PLAY

IT was the fall and winter of '76 that Bret Harte came to Hartford and collaborated with Mark Twain on the play "Ah Sin," a comedy-drama, or melodrama, written for Charles T. Parsloe, the great impersonator of Chinese character. Harte had written a successful play which unfortunately he had sold outright for no great sum, and was eager for another venture. Harte had the dramatic sense and constructive invention. He also had humor, but he felt the need of the sort of humor that Mark Twain could furnish. Furthermore, he believed that a play backed by both their reputations must start with great advantages. Clemens also realized these things, and the arrangement was made. Speaking of their method of working, Clemens once said:

"Well, Bret came down to Hartford and we talked it over, and then Bret wrote it while I played billiards, but of course I had to go over it to get the dialect right. Bret never did know anything about dialect." Which is hardly a fair statement of the case. They both worked on the play, and worked hard.

During the period of its construction Harte had an order for a story which he said he must finish at once, as he needed the money. It must be delivered by the following night, and he insisted that he must be getting at it without a moment's delay. Still he seemed in no haste to begin. The evening passed; bedtime came. Then he asked that an open fire might be made in his room and a bottle of whisky sent up, in case he needed something to keep him awake. George attended to these matters, and nothing more was heard of Harte until very early next morning, when he rang for George and asked for a fresh fire and an additional supply of whisky. At breakfast-time he appeared, fresh, rosy, and elate, with the announcement that his story was complete.

That forenoon the Saturday Morning Club met at the Clemens home. It was a young women's club, of which Mark Twain was a sort of honorary member—a club for the purpose of intellectual advancement, somewhat on the order of the Monday Evening Club of men, except that the papers read before it were not prepared by members, but by men and women prominent in some field of intellectual progress. Bret Harte had agreed to read to them on this particular occasion, and he gaily appeared and gave them the story just finished, "Thankful Blossom," a tale which Mark Twain always regarded as one of Harte's very best.

The new play, "Ah Sin," by Mark Twain and Bret Harte, was put on at Washington, at the National Theater, on the evening of May 7, 1877. It had been widely exploited in the newspapers, and the fame of the authors insured a crowded opening. Clemens was unable to go over on account of a sudden attack of bronchitis. Parsloe was nervous accordingly, and the presence of Harte does not seem to have added to his happiness.

"I am not very well myself," he wrote to Clemens. "The excitement of the first night is bad enough, but to have the annoyance with Harte that I have is too much for a new beginner."

Nevertheless, the play seems to have gone well, with Parsloe as Ah Sin—a Chinese laundryman who was also a great number of other diverting things—with a fair support and a happy-go-lucky presentation of frontier life, which included a supposed murder, a false accusation, and a general clearing-up of mystery by the pleasant and wily and useful and entertaining Ah Sin. It was not a great play. It was neither very coherent nor convincing, but it had a lot of good fun in it, with character parts which, if not faithful to life, were faithful enough to the public conception of it to be amusing and exciting. At the end of each act not only Parsloe, but also the principal members of the company, were called before the curtain for special acknowledgments. When it was over there was a general call for Ah Sin, who came before the curtain and read a telegram.

> CHARLES T. PARSLOE,—I am on the sick-list, and therefore cannot come to Washington; but I have prepared two speeches —one to deliver in event of failure of the play, and the other if successful. Please tell me which I shall send. May be better to put it to vote.
>
> MARK TWAIN.

The house cheered the letter, and when it was put to vote decided unanimously that the play had been a success—a verdict more kindly than true.

J. I. Ford, of the theater management, wrote to Clemens, next morning after the first performance, urging him to come to Washington in person and "wet nurse" the play until "it could do for itself."

Ford expressed satisfaction with the play and its prospects, and concludes:

> I inclose notices. Come if you can. "Your presence will be worth ten thousand men. The king's name is a tower of strength." I have urged the President to come to-night.

The play made no money in Washington, but Augustin Daly decided to put it on in New York at the Fifth

Avenue Theater, with a company which included, besides Parsloe, Edmund Collier, P. A. Anderson, Dora Goldthwaite, Henry Crisp, and Mrs. Wells, a very worthy group of players indeed. Clemens was present at the opening, dressed in white, which he affected only for warm-weather use in those days, and made a speech at the end of the third act.

"Ah Sin" did not excite much enthusiasm among New York dramatic critics. The houses were promising for a time, but for some reason the performance as a whole did not contain the elements of prosperity. It set out on its provincial travels with no particular prestige beyond the reputation of its authors; and it would seem that this was not enough, for it failed to pay, and all parties concerned presently abandoned it to its fate and it was heard of no more. Just why "Ah Sin" did not prosper it would not become us to decide at this far remove of time and taste. Poorer plays have succeeded and better plays have failed since then, and no one has ever been able to demonstrate the mystery. A touch somewhere, a pulling-about and a readjustment, might have saved "Ah Sin," but the pullings and haulings which they gave it did not. Perhaps it still lies in some managerial vault, and some day may be dragged to light and reconstructed and recast, and come into its reward. Who knows? Or it may have drifted to that harbor of forgotten plays, whence there is no returning.

As between Harte and Clemens, the whole matter was unfortunate. In the course of their association there arose a friction and the long-time friendship disappeared.

CXI

A BERMUDA HOLIDAY

ON the 16th of May, 1877, Mark Twain set out on what, in his note-book, he declared to be "the first actual pleasure-trip" he had ever taken, meaning that on every previous trip he had started with a purpose other than that of mere enjoyment. He took with him his friend and pastor, the Rev. Joseph H. Twichell, and they sailed for Bermuda, an island resort not so well known or so fashionable as to-day.

They did not go to a hotel. Under assumed names they took up quarters in a boarding-house, with a Mrs. Kirkham, and were unmolested and altogether happy in their wanderings through four golden days. Mark Twain could not resist keeping a note-book, setting down bits of scenery and character and incident, just as he had always done. He was impressed with the cheapness of property and living in the Bermuda of that period. He makes special mention of some cottages constructed of coral blocks: "All as beautiful and as neat as a pin, at the cost of four hundred and eighty dollars each." To Twichell he remarked:

"Joe, this place is like Heaven, and I'm going to make the most of it."

"Mark," said Twichell, "that's right; make the most of a place that is *like* Heaven while you have a chance."

In one of the entries—the final one—Clemens says:

"Bermuda is free (at present) from the triple curse of railways, telegraphs, and newspapers, but this will not last the year. I propose to spend next year here and no more."

When they were ready to leave, and started for the steamer, Twichell made an excuse to go back, his purpose being to tell their landlady and her daughter that, without knowing it, they had been entertaining Mark Twain.

"Did you ever hear of Mark Twain?" asked Twichell.

The daughter answered.

"Yes," she said, "until I'm tired of the name. I know a young man who never talks of anything else."

"Well," said Twichell, "that gentleman with me is Mark Twain."

The Kirkhams declined to believe it at first, and then were in deep sorrow that they had not known it earlier. Twichell promised that he and Clemens would come back the next year; and they meant to go back—we always mean to go back to places—but it was thirty years before they returned at last, and then their pleasant landlady was dead.

On the home trip they sighted a wandering vessel, manned by blacks, trying to get to New York. She had no cargo and was pretty helpless. Later, when she was reported again, Clemens wrote about it in a Hartford paper, telling the story as he knew it. The vessel had shipped the crew, on a basis of passage to New York, in exchange for labor. So it was a "pleasure-excursion!" Clemens dwelt on this fancy:

> I have heard of a good many pleasure-excursions, but this heads the list. It is monumental, and if ever the tired old tramp is found I should like to be there and see him in his sorrowful rags and his venerable head of grass and seaweed, and hear the ancient mariners tell the story of their mysterious wanderings through the solemn solitudes of the ocean.

Long afterward this vagrant craft was reported again, still drifting with the relentless Gulf Stream. Perhaps she reached New York in time; one would like to know, but there seems no good way to find out.

That first Bermuda voyage was always a happy memory to Mark Twain. To Twichell he wrote that it was the "joyousest trip" he had ever made:

> Not a heartache anywhere, not a twinge of conscience. I often come to myself out of a reverie and detect an undertone of thought that had been thinking itself without volition of mind—*viz.*, that if we had only had ten days of those walks and talks instead of four.

There was but one regret: Howells had not been with them. Clemens denounced him for his absence:

> If you had gone with us and let me pay the fifty dollars, which the trip and the board and the various knick-knacks and mementos would cost, I would have picked up enough droppings from your conversation to pay me five hundred per cent. profit in the way of the *several* magazine articles which I could have written; whereas I can now write only one or two, and am therefore largely out of pocket by your proud ways.

Clemens would not fail to write about his trip. He could not help doing that, and he began "Some Rambling Notes of an Idle Excursion" as soon as he landed in Hartford. They were quite what the name would signify—leisurely, pleasant commentaries on a loafing, peaceful vacation. They are not startling in their humor or description, but are gently amusing and summery, reflecting, bubble-like, evanescent fancies of Bermuda. Howells, shut up in a Boston editorial office, found them delightful enough, and very likely his *Atlantic* readers agreed with him. The story of "Isaac and the Prophets of Baal" was one that Capt. Ned Wakeman had told to Twichell during a voyage which the latter had made to Aspinwall with that vigorous old seafarer; so in the "Rambling Notes" Wakeman appears as Captain Hurricane Jones, probably a step in the evolution of the later name of Stormfield. The best feature of the series (there were four papers in all) is a story of a rescue in mid-ocean; but surely the brightest ripple of humor is the reference to Bermuda's mahogany-tree:

> There was exactly one mahogany-tree on the island. I know this to be reliable because I saw a man who said he had counted it many a time and could not be mistaken. He was a man with a hare lip and a pure heart, and everybody said he was as true as steel. Such men are all too few.

Clemens cared less for these papers than did Howells. He had serious doubts about the first two and suggested their destruction, but with Howells's appreciation his own confidence in them returned and he let them all go in. They did not especially advance his reputation, but perhaps they did it no harm.

CXII

A NEW PLAY AND A NEW TALE

HE wrote a short story that year which is notable mainly for the fact that in it the telephone becomes a literary property, probably for the first time. "The Loves of Alonzo Fitz-Clarence and Rosannah Ethelton" employed in the consummation what was then a prospect, rather than a reality—long-distance communication.

His work that summer consisted mainly of two extensive undertakings, one of which he completed without delay. He still had the dramatic ambition, and he believed that he was capable now of constructing a play entirely from his own resources.

To Howells, in June, he wrote:

> To-day I am deep in a comedy which I began this morning—principal character an old detective. I skeletoned the first act and *wrote* the second to-day, and am dog-tired now. Fifty-four pages of MS. in seven hours.

Seven days later, the Fourth of July, he said:

> I have piled up one hundred and fifty-one pages on my comedy. The first, second and fourth acts are done, and done to my satisfaction, too. To-morrow and next day will finish the third act, and the play. Never had so much fun over anything in my life—never such consuming interest and delight. And just think! I had Sol Smith Russell in my mind's eye for the old detective's part, and hang it! he has gone off pottering with Oliver Optic, or else the papers lie.

He was working with enthusiasm, you see, believing in it with a faith which, alas, was no warrant for its quality. Even Howells caught his enthusiasm and became eager to see the play, and to have the story it contained told for the *Atlantic*.

But in the end it proved a mistake. Dion Boucicault, when he read the manuscript, pronounced it better than "Ah Sin," but that was only qualified praise. Actors who considered the play, anxious enough to have Mark Twain's name on their posters and small bills, were obliged to admit that, while it contained marvelous lines, it wouldn't "go." John Brougham wrote:

> There is an absolute "embarrassment of riches" in your "Detective" most assuredly, but the difficulty is to put it into profitable form. The quartz is there in abundance, only requiring the necessary manipulation to extract the gold.
>
> In narrative structure the story would be full of life, character, and the most exuberant fun, but it is altogether too diffuse in its present condition for dramatic representation, and I confess I do not feel sufficient confidence in my own experience (even if I had the time, which on reflection I find I have not) to undertake what, under different circumstances, would be a "labor of love."
>
> Yours sincerely,
>
> John Brougham.

That was frank, manly, and to the point; it covered the ground exactly. "Simon Wheeler, the Amateur Detective," had plenty of good material in it—plenty of dialogue and situations; but the dialogue wouldn't play and the situations wouldn't act. Clemens realized that perhaps the drama was not, after all, his forte; he dropped "Simon Wheeler," lost his interest in "Ah Sin," even leased "Colonel Sellers" for the coming season, and so, in a sort of fury, put theatrical matters out of his mind.

He had entered upon what, for him, was a truer domain. One day he picked up from among the books at the farm a little juvenile volume, an English story of the thirteenth century by Charlotte M. Yonge, entitled, *The Prince and the Page.* It was a story of Edward I. and his cousins, Richard and Henry de Montfort; in part it told of the submerged personality of the latter, picturing him as having dwelt in disguise as a blind beggar for a period of years. It was a story of a sort and with a setting that Mark Twain loved, and as he read there came a correlative idea. Not only would he disguise a prince as a beggar, but a beggar a a prince. He would have them change places in the world, and each learn the burdens of the other's life.[1]

The plot presented physical difficulties. He still had some lurking thought of stage performance, and saw in his mind a spectacular presentation, with all the costumery of an early period as background for a young and beautiful creature who would play the part of prince. The old device of changelings in the cradle (later used in *Pudd'nhead Wilson*) presented itself to him, but it could not provide the situations he had in mind. Finally came the thought of a playful interchange of raiment and state (with startling and unlooked-for consequence)—the guise and personality of Tom Canty, of Offal Court, for those of the son of Henry VIII., little Edward Tudor, more lately sixth English king of that name. This little prince was not his first selection for the part. His original idea had been to use the late King Edward VII. (then Prince of Wales) at about fifteen, but he found that it would never answer to lose a prince among the slums of modern London, and have his proud estate denied and jeered at by a modern mob. He felt that he could not make it seem real; so he followed back through history, looking along for the proper time and prince, till he came to little Edward, who was too young—but no matter, he would do.

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[1] There is no point of resemblance between the *Prince and the Pauper* and the tale that inspired it. No one would ever guess that the one had grown out of the readings of the other, and no comparison of any sort is possible between them.

He decided to begin his new venture in story form. He could dramatize it later. The situation appealed to him immensely. The idea seemed a brand-new one; it was delightful, it was fascinating, and he was saturated with the atmosphere and literature and history—the data and detail of that delightful old time. He put away all thought of cheap, modern play-acting and writing, to begin one of the loveliest and most entertaining and instructive tales of old English life. He decided to be quite accurate in his picture of the period, and he posted himself on old London very carefully. He bought a pocket-map which he studied in the minutest detail.

He wrote about four hundred manuscript pages of the tale that summer; then, as the inspiration seemed to lag a little, put it aside, as was his habit, to wait until the ambition for it should be renewed. It was a long wait, as usual. He did not touch it again for more than three years.

CXIII

TWO DOMESTIC DRAMAS

SOME unusual happenings took place that summer of 1877. John T. Lewis (colored), already referred to as the religious antagonist of Auntie Cord, by great presence of mind and bravery saved the lives of Mrs. Clemens's sister-in-law, Mrs. Charles ("Charley") Langdon, her little daughter Julia, and her nurse-maid. They were in a buggy, and their runaway horse was flying down East Hill toward Elmira to certain destruction, when Lewis, laboring slowly homeward with a loaded wagon, saw them coming and turned his team across the road, after which he leaped out and with extraordinary strength and quickness grabbed the horse's bridle and brought him to a standstill. The Clemens and Crane families, who had seen the runaway start at the farm gate, arrived half wild with fear, only to find the supposed victims entirely safe.

Everybody contributed in rewarding Lewis. He received money ($1,500) and various other presents, including inscribed books and trinkets, also, what he perhaps valued more than anything, a marvelous stem-winding gold watch. Clemens, writing a full account to Dr. Brown of the watch, says:

> And if any scoffer shall say, "behold this thing is out of character," there is an inscription within which will silence him; for it will teach him that this wearer aggrandizes the watch, not the watch the wearer.

In another paragraph he says:

> When Lewis arrived the other evening, after having saved those lives by a feat which I think is the most marvelous I can call to mind, when he arrived hunched up on his manure-wagon and as grotesquely picturesque as usual, everybody wanted to go and see how he looked. They came back and said he was beautiful. It was *so*, too, and yet he would have *photographed* exactly as he would have done any day these past seven years that he has occupied this farm.

Lewis acknowledged his gifts in a letter which closed with a paragraph of rare native loftiness:

> But I beg to say, humbly, that inasmuch as divine Providence saw fit to use me as an instrument for the saving of those preshious lives, the honner conferd upon me was greater than the feat performed.

Lewis lived to enjoy his prosperity, and the honor of the Clemens and Langdon households, for twenty-nine years. When he was too old to work there was a pension, to which Clemens contributed; also Henry H. Rogers. So the simple-hearted, noble old negro closed his days in peace.

Mrs. Crane, in a letter, late in July, 1906, told of his death:

> He was always cheerful, and seemed not to suffer much pain, told stories, and was able to eat almost everything.
>
> Three days ago a new difficulty appeared, on account of which his doctor said he must go to the hospital for care such as it was quite impossible to give in his home.
>
> He died on his way there.

Thus it happened that he died on the road where he had performed his great deed.

A second unusual incident of that summer occurred in Hartford. There had been a report of a strange man seen about the Clemens place, thought to be a prospecting burglar, and Clemens went over to investigate. A little searching inquiry revealed that the man was not a burglar, but a mechanic out of employment, a lover of one of the house-maids, who had given him food and shelter on the premises, intending no real harm. When the girl found that her secret was discovered, she protested that he was her *fiancé*, though she said he appeared lately to have changed his mind and no longer wished to marry her.

The girl seemed heartbroken, and sympathy for her was naturally the first and about the only feeling which Clemens developed, for the time being. He reasoned with the young man, but without making much headway. Finally his dramatic instinct prompted him to a plan of a sort which would have satisfied even Tom Sawyer. He asked Twichell to procure a license for the couple, and to conceal himself in a ground floor bath-room. He arranged with the chief of police to be on hand in another room; with the rest of the servants quietly to prepare a wedding-feast, and finally with Lizzie herself to be dressed for the ceremony. He had already made an appointment with the young man to come to see him at a certain hour on a "matter of business," and the young man arrived in the belief, no doubt, that it was something which would lead to profitable employment. When he came in Clemens gently and quietly reviewed the situation, told him of the young girl's love for him; how he had been sheltered and fed by her; how through her kindness to him she had compromised her reputation for honesty and brought upon her all the suspicion of having sheltered a burglar; how she was ready and willing to marry him, and how he (Clemens) was ready to assist them to obtain work and a start in life.

But the young man was not enthusiastic. He was a Swede and slow of action. He resolutely declared that he was not ready to marry yet, and in the end refused to do so. Then came the dramatic moment. Clemens quietly but firmly informed him that the wedding ceremony must take place; that by infesting his premises he had broken the law, not only against trespass, but most likely against house-breaking. There was a brief discussion of this point. Finally Clemens gave him five minutes to make up his mind, with the statement that he had an officer in waiting, and unless he would consent to the wedding he would be taken in charge. The young man began to temporize, saying that it would be necessary for him to get a license and a preacher. But Clemens stepped to the door of the bath-room, opened it, and let out Twichell, who had been sweltering there in that fearful place for more than an hour, it being August. The delinquent lover found himself confronted with all the requisites of matrimony except the bride, and just then this detail appeared on the scene, dressed for the occasion. Behind her ranged the rest of the servants and a few invited guests. Before the young man knew it he had a wife, and on the whole did not seem displeased. It ended with a gay supper and festivities. Then Clemens started them handsomely by giving each of them a check for one hundred dollars; and in truth (which in this case, at least, is stranger than fiction) they lived happily and prosperously ever after.

Some years later Mark Twain based a story on this episode, but it was never entirely satisfactory and remains unpublished.

CXIV

THE WHITTIER BIRTHDAY SPEECH

IT was the night of December 17, 1877, that Mark Twain made his unfortunate speech at the dinner given by the *Atlantic* staff to John G. Whittier on his seventieth birthday. Clemens had attended a number of the dinners which the *Atlantic* gave on one occasion or another, and had provided a part of the entertainment. It is only fair to say that his after-dinner speeches at such times had been regarded as very special events, genuine triumphs of humor and delivery. But on this particular occasion he determined to outdo himself, to prepare something unusual, startling, something altogether unheard of.

When Mark Twain had an impulse like that it was possible for it to result in something dangerous, especially in those earlier days. This time it produced a bombshell; not just an ordinary bombshell, or even a twelve-inch projectile, but a shell of planetary size. It was a sort of hoax—always a doubtful plaything—and in this case it brought even quicker and more terrible retribution than usual. It was an imaginary presentation of three disreputable frontier tramps who at some time had imposed themselves on a lonely miner as Longfellow, Emerson, and Holmes, quoting apposite selections from their verses to the accompaniment of cards and drink, and altogether conducting themselves in a most unsavory fashion. At the end came the enlightenment that these were not what they pretended to be, but only impostors—disgusting frauds. A feature like that would be a doubtful thing to try in any cultured atmosphere. The thought of associating, ever so remotely, those three old bummers which he had conjured up with the venerable and venerated Emerson, Longfellow, and Holmes, the Olympian trinity, seems ghastly enough to-day, and must have seemed even more so then. But Clemens, dazzled by the rainbow splendor of his conception, saw in it only a rare colossal humor, which would fairly lift and bear his hearers along on a tide of mirth. He did not show his effort to any one beforehand. He wanted its full beauty to burst upon the entire company as a surprise.

It did that. Howells was toastmaster, and when he came to present Clemens he took particular pains to introduce him as one of his foremost contributors and dearest friends. Here, he said, was "a humorist who never left you hanging you head for having enjoyed his joke."

Thirty years later Clemens himself wrote of his impressions as he rose to deliver his speech.

> I vaguely remember some of the details of that gathering: dimly I can see a hundred people—no, perhaps fifty—shadowy figures, sitting at tables feeding, ghosts now to me, and nameless forevermore. I don't know who they were, but I can very distinctly see, seated at the grand table and facing the rest of us, Mr. Emerson, supernaturally grave, unsmiling; Mr. Whittier, grave, lovely, his beautiful spirit shining out of his face; Mr. Longfellow, with his silken-white hair and his benignant face; Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, flashing smiles and affection and all good-fellowship everywhere, like a rose-diamond whose facets are being turned toward the light, first one way and then another—a charming man, and always fascinating, whether he was talking or whether he was sitting still (what he would call still, but what would be more or less motion to other people). I can see those figures with entire distinctiness across this abyss of time.

William Winter, the poet, had just preceded him, and it seemed a moment aptly chosen for his so-different theme. "And then," to quote Howells, "the amazing mistake, the bewildering blunder, the cruel catastrophe was upon us."

After the first two or three hundred words, when the general plan and purpose of the burlesque had developed, when the names of Longfellow, Emerson, and Holmes began to be flung about by those bleary outcasts, and their verses given that sorry association, those *Atlantic* diners became petrified with amazement and horror. Too late, then, the speaker realized his mistake. He could not stop, he must go on to the ghastly end. And somehow he did it, while "there fell a silence weighing many tons to the square inch, which deepened from moment to moment, and was broken only by the hysterical and blood-curdling laughter of a single guest, whose name shall not be handed down to infamy."

Howells can remember little more than that, but Clemens recalls that one speaker made an effort to follow him—Bishop, the novelist, and that Bishop didn't last long.

> It was not many sentences after his first before he began to hesitate and break, and lose his grip, and totter and wobble, and at last he slumped down in a limp and mushy pile.

The next man had not strength to rise, and somehow the company broke up.

Howells's next recollection is of being in a room of the hotel, and of hearing Charles Dudley Warner saying in the gloom:

"Well, Mark, *you're* a funny fellow."

He remembers how, after a sleepless night, Clemens went out to buy some bric-à-brac, with a soul far from bric-à-brac, and returned to Hartford in a writhing agony of spirit. He believed that he was ruined forever, so far as his Boston associations were concerned; and when he confessed all the tragedy to Mrs. Clemens it seemed to her also that the mistake could never be wholly repaired. The fact that certain papers quoted the speech and spoke well of it, and certain readers who had not listened to it thought it enormously funny, gave very little comfort. But perhaps his chief concern was the ruin which he believed he had brought upon Howells. He put his heart into a brief letter:

> My dear Howells,—My sense of disgrace does not abate. It grows. I see that it is going to add itself to my list of permanencies, a list of humiliations that extends back to when I was seven years old, and which keep on persecuting me regardless of my repentances.
>
> I feel that my misfortune has injured me all over the country; therefore it will be best that I retire from before the public at present. It will hurt the *Atlantic* for me to appear in its pages now. So it is my opinion, and my wife's, that the telephone story had better be suppressed. Will you return those proofs or revises to me, so that I can use the same on some future occasion?
>
> It seems as if I must have been insane when I wrote that speech and saw no harm in it, no disrespect toward those men whom I reverenced so much. And what shame I brought upon *you*, after what you said in introducing me! It burns me like fire to think of it.
>
> The whole matter is a dreadful subject. Let me drop it here—at least on paper.
>
> Penitently yours, Mark.

So, all in a moment, his world had come to an end—as it seemed. But Howells's letter, which came rushing back by first mail, brought hope.

"It was a fatality," Howells said. "One of those sorrows into which a man walks with his eyes wide open, no one knows why."

Howells assured him that Longfellow, Emerson, and Holmes would so consider it, beyond doubt; that Charles Eliot Norton had already expressed himself exactly in the right spirit concerning it. Howells declared that there was no intention of dropping Mark Twain's work from the *Atlantic.*

> You are not going to be floored by it; there is more justice than that even in *this* world. Especially as regards *me*, just call the sore spot well. I can say more, and with better heart, in praise of your good feeling (which was what I always liked in you), since this thing happened than I could before.

It was agreed that he should at once write a letter to Longfellow, Emerson, and Holmes, and he did write, laying his heart bare to them. Longfellow and Holmes answered in a fine spirit of kindliness, and Miss Emerson wrote for her father in the same tone. Emerson had not been offended, for he had not heard the speech, having arrived even then at that stage of semi-oblivion as to immediate things which eventually so completely shut him away. Longfellow's letter made light of the whole matter. The newspapers, he said, had caused all the mischief.

> A bit of humor at a dinner-table talk is one thing; a report of it in the morning papers is another. One needs the lamplight and the scenery. These failing, what was meant in jest assumes a serious aspect.
>
> I do not believe that anybody was much hurt. Certainly I was not, and Holmes tells me that he was not. So I think you may dismiss the matter from your mind, without further remorse.
>
> It was a very pleasant dinner, and I think Whittier enjoyed it very much.

Holmes likewise referred to it as a trifle.

> It never occurred to me for a moment to take offense, or to feel wounded by your playful use of my name. I have heard some mild questioning as to whether, even in fun, it was good taste to associate the names of the authors with the absurdly unlike personalities attributed to them, but it seems to be an

open question. Two of my friends, gentlemen of education and the highest social standing, were infinitely amused by your speech, and stoutly defended it against the charge of impropriety. More than this, one of the cleverest and best-known ladies we have among us was highly delighted with it.

Miss Emerson's letter was to Mrs. Clemens and its homelike New England fashion did much to lift the gloom.

Dear Mrs. Clemens,—At New Year's our family always meets, to spend two days together. To-day my father came last, and brought with him Mr. Clemens's letter, so that I read it to the assembled family, and I have come right up-stairs to write to you about it. My sister said, "Oh, let father write!" but my mother said, "No, don't wait for him. Go now; don't stop to pick that up. Go this minute and write. I think that is a noble letter. Tell them so." First let me say that no shadow of indignation has ever been in any of our minds. The night of the dinner, my father says, he did not hear Mr. Clemens's speech. He was too far off, and my mother says that when she read it to him the next day it amused him. But what you will want is to know, without any softening, how we did feel. We were disappointed. We have liked almost everything we have ever seen over Mark Twain's signature. It has made us like the man, and we have delighted in the fun. Father has often asked us to repeat certain passages of *The Innocents Abroad*, and of a speech at a London dinner in 1872, and we all expect both to approve and to enjoy when we see his name. Therefore, when we read this speech it was a real disappointment. I said to my brother that it didn't seem good or funny, and he said, "No, it was unfortunate. Still some of those quotations were very good"; and he gave them with relish and my father laughed, though never having seen a card in his life, he couldn't understand them like his children. My mother read it lightly and had hardly any second thoughts about it. To my father it is as if it had not been; he never quite heard, never quite understood it, and he forgets easily and entirely. I think it doubtful whether he writes to Mr. Clemens, for he is old and long ago gave up answering letters. I think you can see just *how* bad, and how little bad, it was as far as we are concerned, and this lovely heartbreaking letter makes up for our diasppointment in our much-liked author, and restores our former feeling about him.

ELLEN T. EMERSON.

The sorrow dulled a little as the days passed. Just after Christmas Clemens wrote to Howells:

> I haven't done a stroke of work since the *Atlantic* dinner. But I'm going to try to-morrow. How could I ever—
>
> Ah, well, I am a great and sublime fool. But then I am God's fool, and all his work must be contemplated with respect.

So long as that unfortunate speech is remembered there will be differences of opinion as to its merits and propriety. Clemens himself, reading it for the first time in nearly thirty years, said:

"I find it gross, coarse—well, I needn't go on with particulars. I don't like any part of it, from the beginning to the end. I find it always offensive and detestable. How do I account for this change of view? I don't know."

But almost immediately afterward he gave it another consideration and reversed his opinion completely. All the spirit and delight of his old first conception returned, and preparing it for publication[1] he wrote:

> I have read it twice, and unless I am an idiot it hasn't a single defect in it, from the first word to the last. It is just as good as good can be. It is smart; it is saturated with humor. There isn't a suggestion of coarseness or vulgarity in it anywhere.

It was altogether like Mark Twain to have those two absolutely opposing opinions in that brief time; for, after all, it was only a question of the human point of view, and Mark Twain's points of view were likely to be as extremely human as they were varied.

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[1] *North American Review*, December, 1907, now with comment included in the volume of "Speeches." Also see Appendix O, at the end of last volume.

Of course the first of these impressions, the verdict of the fresh mind uninfluenced by the old conception, was the more correct one. The speech was decidedly out of place in that company. The skit was harmless enough, but it was of the Comstock grain. It lacked refinement, and, what was still worse, it lacked humor, at least the humor of a kind suited to that long-ago company of listeners. It was another of those grievous mistakes which genius (and not talent) can make, for genius is a sort of possession. The individual is pervaded, dominated for a time by an angel or an imp, and he seldom, of himself, is able to discriminate between his controls. A literary imp was always lying in wait for Mark Twain; the imp of the burlesque, tempting him to do the *outré*, the outlandish, the shocking thing. It was this that Olivia Clemens had to labor hardest against: the cheapening of his own high purpose with an extravagant false note, at which sincerity, conviction, and artistic harmony took wings and fled away. Notably he did a good burlesque now and then, but his fame would not have suffered if he had been delivered altogether from his besetting temptation.

CXV

HARTFORD AND BILLIARDS

CLEMENS was never much inclined to work, away from his Elmira study. "Magnanimous Incident Literature" (for the *Atlantic*) was about his only completed work of the winter of 1877-78. He was always tinkering with the "Visit to Heaven," and after one reconstruction Howells suggested that he bring it out as a book, in England, with Dean Stanley's indorsement, though this may have been only semi-serious counsel. The story continued to lie in seclusion.

Clemens had one new book in the field—a small book, but profitable. Dan Slote's firm issued for him the Mark Twain Scrap-book, and at the end of the first royalty period rendered a statement of twenty-five thousand copies sold, which was well enough for a book that did not contain a single word that critics could praise or condemn. Slote issued another little book for him soon after—*Punch, Brothers, Punch!*—which, besides that lively sketch, contained the "Random Notes" and seven other selections.

Mark Twain was tempted to go into the lecture field that winter, not by any of the offers, though these were numerous enough, but by the idea of a combination which he thought might be not only profitable but pleasant. Thomas Nast had made a great success of his caricature lectures, and Clemens, recalling Nast's long-ago proposal, found it newly attractive. He wrote characteristically:

My dear Nast,—I did not think I should ever stand on a platform again until the time was come for me to say, "I die innocent." But the same old offers keep arriving. I have declined them all, just as usual, though sorely tempted, as usual.

Now, I do not decline because I mind talking to an audience, but because (1) traveling alone is so heartbreakingly dreary, and (2) shouldering the whole show is such a cheer-killing responsibility.

Therefore, I now propose to you what you proposed to me in 1867, ten years ago (when I was unknown)—*viz.*, that you stand on the platform and make pictures, and I stand by you and blackguard the audience. I should enormously enjoy meandering around (to big towns—don't want to go to the little ones), with you for company.

My idea is not to fatten the lecture agents and lyceums on the spoils, but to put all the ducats religiously into two equal piles, and say to the artist and lecturer, "absorb these."

For instance, [here follows a plan and a possible list of the cities to be visited]. The letter continues:

Call the gross receipts $100,000 for four months and a half, and the profit from $60,000 to $75,000 (I try to make the figures large enough, and leave it to the public to reduce them).

I did not put in Philadelphia because Pugh owns that town, and last winter, when I made a little reading-trip, he only paid me $300, and pretended his concert (I read fifteen minutes in the midst of a concert) cost him a vast sum, and so he couldn't afford any more. I could get up a better concert with a barrel of cats.

I have imagined two or three pictures and concocted the accompanying remarks, to see how the thing would go. I was charmed.

Well, you think it over, Nast, and drop me a line. We should have some fun.

Undoubtedly this would have been a profitable combination, but Nast had a distaste for platforming—had given it up, as he thought, for life. So Clemens settled down to the fireside days, that afforded him always the larger comfort. The children were at an age to be entertaining, and to be entertained. In either case they furnished him plenty of diversion when he did not care to write. They had learned his gift as a romancer, and with this audience he might be as extravagant as he liked. They sometimes assisted by furnishing subjects. They would bring him a picture, requiring him to invent a story for it without a moment's delay. Sometimes they suggested the names of certain animals or objects, and demanded that these be made into a fairy tale. If they heard the name of any new creature or occupation they were likely to offer them as impromptu inspiration. Once he was suddenly required to make a story out of a plumber and a "bawgunstrictor," but he was equal to it. On one side of the library, along the book-shelves that joined the mantelpiece, were numerous ornaments and pictures. At one end was the head of a girl, that they called "Emeline," and at the other was an oil-painting of a cat. When other subjects failed, the romancer was obliged to build a story impromptu, and without preparation, beginning with the cat, working along through the bric-à-brac, and ending with"Emeline." This was the unvarying program. He was not allowed to begin with "Emeline" and end with the cat, and he was not permitted to introduce an ornament from any other portion of the room. He could vary the story as much as he liked. In fact, he was required to do that. The trend of its chapters, from the cat to "Emeline," was a well-trodden and ever-entertaining way.

He gave up his luxurious study to the children as a sort of nursery and playroom, and took up his writing-quarters, first in a room over the stables, then in the billiard-room, which, on the whole, he preferred to any other place, for it was a third-story remoteness, and he could knock the balls about for inspiration.

The billiard-room became his headquarters. He received his callers there and impressed them into the game. If they could play, well and good; if they could not play, so much the better—he could beat them extravagantly, and he took a huge delight in such conquests. Every Friday evening, or oftener, a small party of billiard-lovers gathered, and played until a late hour, told stories, and smoked till the room was blue, comforting themselves with hot Scotch and general good-fellowship. Mark Twain always had a genuine passion for billiards. He was never tired of the game. He could play all night. He would stay till the last man gave out from sheer weariness; then he would go on knocking the balls about alone. He liked to invent new games and new rules for old games, often inventing a rule on the spur of the moment to fit some particular shot or position on the table. It amused him highly to do this, to make the rule advantage his own play, and to pretend a deep indignation when his opponents disqualified his rulings and rode him down. S. C. Dunham was among those who belonged to the "Friday Evening Club," as they called it, and Henry C. Robinson, long dead, and rare Ned Bunce, and F. G. Whitmore; and the old room there at the top of the house, with its little outside balcony, rang with their voices and their laughter in that day when life and the world for them was young. Clemens quoted to them sometimes:

> Come, fill the cup, and in the fire of spring
> Your winter garment of repentance fling;
>   The bird of time has but a little way
> To flutter, and the bird is on the wing.

Omar was new then on this side of the Atlantic, and to his serene "eat, drink, and be merry" philosophy, in Fitzgerald's rhyme, these were early converts. Mark Twain had an impressive, musical delivery of verse; the players were willing at any moment to listen as he recited:

> For some we loved, the loveliest and best
> That from his vintage rolling time has prest,

Have drunk their cup a round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to rest.

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the dust descend;
Dust unto dust, and under dust to lie,
Sans wine, sans song, sans singer, and—sans End.[1]

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[1] The *Rubaiyat* had made its first appearance, in Hartford, a little before in a column of extracts published in the *Courant*. Twichell immediately wrote Clemens a card:

"Read (if you haven't) the extracts from Omar Khayyam, on the first page of this morning's *Courant*. I think we'll have to get the book. I never yet came across anything that uttered certain thoughts of mine so adequately. And it's only a translation. Read it, and we'll talk it over. There is something in it very like the passage of Emerson you read me last night, in fact identical with it in thought.

"Surely this Omar was a great poet. Anyhow, he has given me an immense revelation this morning.

"Hoping that you are better, J. H. T."

Twichell's "only a translation" has acquired a certain humor with time.

CXVI

OFF FOR GERMANY

THE German language became one of the interests of the Clemens home during the early months of 1878. The Clemenses had long looked forward to a sojourn in Europe, and the demand for another Mark Twain book of travel furnished an added reason for their going. They planned for the spring sailing, and to spend a year or more on the Continent, making their headquarters in Germany. So they entered into the study of the language with an enthusiasm and perseverance that insured progress. There was a German nurse for the children, and the whole atmosphere of the household presently became lingually Teutonic. It amused Mark Twain, as everything amused him, but he was a good student; he acquired a working knowledge of the language in an extraordinarily brief time, just as in an earlier day he had picked up piloting. He would never become a German scholar, but his vocabulary and use of picturesque phrases, particularly those that combined English and German words, were often really startling, not only for their humor, but for their expressiveness.

Necessarily the new study would infect his literature. He conceived a plan for making Captain Wakeman (Stormfield) come across a copy of Ollendorf in Heaven, and proceed to learn the language of a near-lying district.

They arranged to sail early in April, and, as on their former trip, persuaded Miss Clara Spaulding, of Elmira, to accompany them. They wrote to the Howellses, breaking the news of the journey, urging them to come to Hartford for a good-by visit. Howells and his wife came. The Twichells, Warners, and other Hartford friends paid repeated farewell calls. The furniture was packed, the rooms desolated, the beautiful home made ready for closing.

They were to have pleasant company on the ship. Bayard Taylor, then recently appointed Minister to Germany, wrote that he had planned to sail on the same vessel; Murat Halstead's wife and daughter were listed among the passengers. Clemens made a brief speech at Taylor's "farewell dinner."

The "Mark Twain" party, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Clemens, Miss Spaulding, little Susy and Clara ("Bay"), and a nurse-maid, Rosa, sailed on the *Holsatia*, April 11, 1878. Bayard Taylor and the Halstead ladies also sailed, as per program; likewise Murat Halstead himself, for whom no program had been made. There was a storm outside, and the *Holsatia* anchored down the bay to wait until the worst was over. As the weather began to moderate Halstead and others came down in a tug for a final word of good-by. When the tug left, Halstead somehow managed to get overlooked, and was presently on his way across the ocean with only such wardrobe as he had on, and what Bayard Taylor, a large man like himself, was willing to lend him. Halstead was accused of having intentionally allowed himself to be left behind, and his case did have a suspicious look; but in any event they were glad to have him along.

In a written word of good-by to Howells, Clemens remembered a debt of gratitude, and paid it in the full measure that was his habit.

> And that reminds me, ungrateful dog that I am, that I owe as much to your training as the rude country job-printer owes to the city boss who takes him in hand and teaches him the right way to handle his art. I was talking to Mrs. Clemens about

> this the other day, and grieving because I never mentioned it to you, thereby seeming to ignore it or to be unaware of it. Nothing that has passed under your eye needs any revision before going into a volume, while all my other stuff does need so *much.*

In that ancient day, before the wireless telegraph, the voyager, when the land fell away behind him, felt a mighty sense of relief and rest, which to some extent has gone now forever. He cannot entirely escape the world in this new day; but *then* he had a complete sense of dismissal from all encumbering cares of life. Among the first note-book entries Mark Twain wrote:

> To go abroad has something of the same sense that death brings—"I am no longer of ye; what ye say of me is now of no consequence—but of how much consequence when I am with ye and of ye. I know you will refrain from saying harsh things *because* they cannot hurt me, since I am out of reach and cannot hear them. This is why we say no harsh things of the dead."

It was a rough voyage outside, but the company made it pleasant within. Halstead and Taylor were good smoking-room companions. Taylor had a large capacity for languages and a memory that was always a marvel. He would repeat for them Arabian, Hungarian, and Russian poetry, and show them the music and construction of it. He sang German folk-lore songs for them, and the "Lorelei," then comparatively unknown in America. Such was his knowledge of the language that even educated Germans on board submitted questions of construction to him and accepted his decisions. He was wisely chosen for the mission he had to fill, but unfortunately he did not fill it long. Both Halstead and Taylor were said to have heart trouble. Halstead, however, survived many years. Taylor died December 19, 1878.

CXVII

GERMANY AND GERMAN

From the note-book:

> It is a marvel that never loses its surprise by repetition, this aiming a ship at a mark three thousand miles away and hitting the bull's-eye in a fog—as we did. When the fog fell on us the captain said we ought to be at such and such a spot (it had been eighteen hours since an observation was had), with the Scilly islands bearing so and so, and about so many miles away. Hove the lead and got forty-eight fathoms; looked on the chart, and sure enough this depth of water showed that we were right where the captain said we were.
>
> Another idea. For ages man probably did not know why God carpeted the ocean bottom with sand in one place, shells in another, and so on. But we see now; the kind of bottom the lead brings up shows where a ship is when the soundings don't, and also it confirms the soundings.

They reached Hamburg after two weeks' stormy sailing. They rested a few days there, then went to Hanover and Frankfort, arriving at Heidelberg early in May.

They had no lodgings selected in Heidelberg, and leaving the others at an inn, Clemens set out immediately to find apartments. Chance or direction, or both, led him to the beautiful Schloss Hotel, on a hill overlooking the city, and as fair a view as one may find in all Germany. He did not go back after his party. He sent a message telling them to take carriage and drive at once to the Schloss, then he sat down to enjoy the view.

Coming up the hill they saw him standing on the veranda, waving his hat in welcome. He led them to their rooms—spacious apartments—and pointed to the view. They were looking down on beautiful Heidelberg Castle, densely wooded hills, the far-flowing Neckar, and the haze-empurpled valley of the Rhine. By and by, pointing to a small cottage on the hilltop, he said:

"I have been picking out my little house to work in; there it is over there; the one with the gable in the roof. Mine is the middle room on the third floor."

Mrs. Clemens thought the occupants of the house might be surprised if he should suddenly knock and tell them he had come to take possession of his room. Nevertheless, they often looked over in that direction and referred to it as his office. They amused themselves by watching his "people" and trying to make out what they were like. One day he went over there, and sure enough there was a sign out, "Möblirte Wohnung zu Vermiethen." A day or two later he was established in the very room he had selected, it being the only room but one vacant.

In *A Tramp Abroad* Mark Twain tells of the beauty of their Heidelberg environment. To Howells he wrote:

> Our bedroom has two great glass bird-cages (inclosed balconies), one looking toward the Rhine Valley and sunset, the other looking up the Neckar *cul-de-sac*, and naturally we spend nearly all our time in these. We have tables and chairs in them; we do our reading, writing, studying, smoking, and suppering in them. . . . It must have been a noble genius who devised this hotel. Lord, how blessed is the repose, the tranquillity of this place! Only two sounds: the happy clamor of the birds in the groves and the muffled music of the Neckar tumbling over the opposing dikes. It is no hardship to lie awake awhile nights, for this subdued roar has exactly the sound of a steady rain beating upon a roof. It is so healing to the spirit; and it bears up the thread of one's imaginings as the accompaniment bears up a song. . . .
>
> I have waited for a "call" to go to work—I knew it would come. Well, it began to come a week ago; my note-book comes out more and more frequently every day since; three days ago

> I concluded to move my manuscripts over to my den. *Now* the call is loud and decided at last. So to-morrow I shall begin regular, steady work, and stick to it till the middle of July or August 1st, when I look for Twichell; we will then walk about Germany two or three weeks, and then I'll go to work again (perhaps in Munich).

The walking tour with Twichell had been contemplated in the scheme for gathering book material, but the plan for it had not been completed when he left Hartford. Now he was anxious that they should start as soon as possible. Twichell, receiving the news in Hartford, wrote that it was a great day for him: that his third son had been happily born early that morning, and now the arrival of this glorious gift of a tramp through Germany and Switzerland completed his blessings.

> I am almost too joyful for pleasure [he wrote]. I labor with my felicities. How I shall get to sleep to-night I don't know, though I have had a good start, in not having slept much last night. Oh, my! *do* you realize, Mark, what a symposium it is to be? I do. To begin with, I am thoroughly tired and the rest will be worth everything. To walk with you and talk with you for weeks together—why, it's my dream of luxury. Harmony, who at sunrise this morning deemed herself the happiest woman on the Continent when I read your letter to her, widened her smile perceptibly, and revived another degree of strength in a minute. She refused to consider her being left alone, but only the great chance opened to me.
>
> SHOES—Mark, remember that ever so much of our pleasure depends upon your shoes. Don't fail to have adequate preparation made in that department.

Meantime, the struggle with the "awful German language" went on. It was a general hand-to-hand contest. From the head of the household down to little Clara not one was exempt. To Clemens it became a sort of nightmare. Once in his note-book he says:

"Dreamed all bad foreigners went to German heaven;

couldn't talk, and wished they had gone to the other place"; and a little farther along, "I wish I could hear myself talk German."

To Mrs. Crane, in Elmira, he reported their troubles:

> Clara Spaulding is working herself to death with her German; never loses an instant while she is awake—or asleep, either, for that matter; dreams of enormous serpents, who poke their heads up under her arms and glare upon her with red-hot eyes, and inquire about the genitive case and the declensions of the definite article. Livy is bullyragging herself about as hard; pesters over her grammar and her reader and her dictionary all day; then in the evening these two students stretch themselves out on sofas and sigh and say, "Oh, there's no use! We never can learn it in the world!" Then Livy takes a sentence to go to bed on: goes gaping and stretching to her pillow murmuring, "Ich bin Ihnen sehr verbunden—Ich bin Ihnen sehr verbunden—Ich bin Ihnen sehr verbunden—I wonder if I *can* get that packed away so it will stay till morning"—and about an hour after midnight she wakes me up and says, "I do so hate to disturb you, but is it 'Ich Ben Jonson sehr befinden'?"

And Mrs. Clemens wrote:

> Oh, Sue dear, strive to enter in at the straight gate, for many shall seek to enter it and shall not be able. I am not striving these days. I am just interested in German.

Rosa, the maid, was required to speak to the children only in German, though Bay at first would have none of it. The nurse and governess tried to blandish her, in vain. She maintained a calm and persistent attitude of scorn. Little Susy tried, and really made progress; but one day she said, pathetically:

"Mama, I wish Rosa was made in English."

Yet a little later Susy herself wrote her Aunt Sue:

> I know a lot of German; everybody says I know a lot. I give you a million dollars to see you, and you would give two hundred dollars to see the lovely woods that we see.

Even Howells, in far-off America, caught the infection and began a letter in German, though he hastened to add, "Or do you prefer English by this time? Really I could imagine the German going hard with you, for you always seemed to me a man who liked to be understood with the least possible personal inconvenience."

Clemens declared more than once that he scorned the "outrageous and impossible German grammar," and abandoned it altogether. In his note-book he records how two Germans, strangers in Heidelberg, asked him a direction, and that when he gave it, in the most elaborate and correct German he could muster, one of them only lifted his eyes and murmured:

"Gott im Himmel!"

He was daily impressed with the lingual attainments of foreigners and his own lack of them. In the notes he comments:

> Am addressed in German, and when I can't speak it immediately the person tackles me in French, and plainly shows astonishment when I stop him. They naturally despise such an ignoramus. Our doctor here speaks as pure English as I.

On the Fourth of July he addressed the American students in Heidelberg in one of those mixtures of tongues for which he had a peculiar gift.

The room he had rented for a study was let by a typical German family, and he was a great delight to them. He practised his German on them, and interested himself in their daily affairs.

Howells wrote insistently for some assurance of contributions to the *Atlantic.*

"I must begin printing your private letters to satisfy the popular demand," he said. "People are constantly asking when you are going to begin."

Clemens replied that he would be only too glad to write for the *Atlantic* if his contributions could be copyrighted in Canada, where pirates were persistently enterprising.

> I do not know that I have any printable stuff just now—separatable stuff, that is—but I shall have by and by. It is very gratifying to hear that it is wanted by anybody. I stand always prepared to hear the reverse, and am constantly surprised that it is delayed so long. Consequently it is not going to astonish me when it comes.

The Clemens party enjoyed Heidelberg, though in different ways. The children romped and picnicked in the castle grounds, which adjoined the hotel; Mrs. Clemens and Miss Spaulding were devoted to bric-à-brac hunting, picture-galleries, and music. Clemens took long walks, or made excursions by rail and diligence to farther points. Art and opera did not appeal to him. The note-book says:

> I have attended operas, whenever I could not help it, for fourteen years now; I am sure I know of no agony comparable to the listening to an unfamiliar opera. I am enchanted with the airs of "Trovatore" and other old operas which the hand-organ and the music-box have made entirely familiar to my ear. I am carried away with delighted enthusiasm when they are sung at the opera. But oh, how far between they are! And what long, arid, heartbreaking and headaching "between-times" of that sort of intense but incoherent noise which always so reminds me of the time the orphan asylum burned down.
>
> *Sunday night*, 11th. Huge crowd out to-night to hear the band play the "Fremersberg." I suppose it is very low-grade music—I know it *must* be low-grade music—because it so delighted me, it so warmed me, moved me, stirred me, uplifted me, enraptured me, that at times I could have cried, and at others split my throat with shouting. The great crowd was another evidence that it was low-grade music, for only the few are educated up to a point where high-class music gives pleasure. I have never heard

enough classic music to be able to enjoy it, and the simple truth is I detest it. Not mildly, but with all my heart.

What a poor lot we human beings are anyway! If base music gives me wings, why should I want any other? But I do. I want to like the higher music because the higher and better like it. But you see I want to like it without taking the necessary trouble, and giving the thing the necessary amount of time and attention. The natural suggestion is, to get into that upper tier, that dress-circle, by a lie—we will *pretend* we like it. This lie, this pretense, gives to opera what support it has in America.

And then there is painting. What a red rag is to a bull Turner's "Slave Ship" is to me. Mr. Ruskin is educated in art up to a point where that picture throws him into as mad an ecstasy of pleasure as it throws me into one of rage. His cultivation enables him to see water in that yellow mud; his cultivation reconciles the floating of unfloatable things to him—chains etc.; it reconciles him to fishes swimming on top of the water. The most of the picture is a manifest impossibility, that is to say, a lie; and only rigid cultivation can enable a man to find truth in a lie. A Boston critic said the "Slave Ship" reminded him of a cat having a fit in a platter of tomatoes. That went home to my non-cultivation, and I thought, here is a man with an unobstructed eye.

Mark Twain has dwelt somewhat upon these matters in *A Tramp Abroad.* He confesses in that book that later he became a great admirer of Turner, though perhaps never of the "Slave Ship" picture. In fact, Mark Twain was never artistic, in the common acceptance of that term; neither his art nor his tastes were of an "artistic" kind.

CXVIII

TRAMPING WITH TWICHELL

TWICHELL arrived on time, August 1st. Clemens met him at Baden-Baden, and they immediately set out on a tramp through the Black Forest, excursioning as pleased them, and having an idyllic good time. They did not always walk, but they often did. At least they did sometimes, when the weather was just right and Clemens's rheumatism did not trouble him. But they were likely to take a carriage, or a donkey-cart, or a train, or any convenient thing that happened along. They did not hurry, but idled and talked and gathered flowers, or gossiped with wayside natives and tourists, though always preferring to wander along together, beguiling the way with discussion and speculation and entertaining tales. They crossed over into Switzerland in due time and considered the conquest of the Alps. The family followed by rail or diligence, and greeted them here and there when they rested from their wanderings. Mark Twain found an immunity from attention in Switzerland, which for years he had not known elsewhere. His face was not so well known and his pen-name was carefully concealed.

It was a large relief to be no longer an object of public curiosity; but Twichell, as in the Bermuda trip, did not feel quite honest, perhaps, in altogether preserving the mask of unrecognition. In one of his letters home he tells how, when a young man at their table was especially delighted with Mark Twain's conversation, he could not resist taking the young man aside and divulging to him the speaker's identity.

"I could not forbear telling him who Mark was," he says, "and the mingled surprise and pleasure his face exhibited made me glad I had done so."

They climbed the Rigi, after which Clemens was not in good walking trim for some time; so Twichell went on a trip on his own account, to give his comrade a chance to rest. Then away again to Interlaken, where the Jungfrau rises, cold and white; on over the loneliness of Gemmi Pass, with glaciers for neighbors and the unfading white peaks against the blue; to Visp and to Zermatt, where the Matterhorn points like a finger that directs mankind to God. This was true Alpine wandering—sweet vagabondage.

The association of the wanderers was a very intimate one. Their minds were closely attuned, and there were numerous instances of thought-echo—mind answering to mind without the employment of words. Clemens records in his notes:

> *Sunday* A.M., *August* 11th. Been reading *Romola* yesterday afternoon, last night, and this morning; at last I came upon the only passage which has thus far *hit me with force*—Tito compromising with his conscience, and resolving to do, not a bad thing, but not the *best* thing. Joe entered the room five minutes—no, three minutes later—and without prelude said, "I read that book you've got there six years ago, and got a mighty good text for a sermon out of it—the passage where the young fellow compromises with his conscience, and resolves to do, not a bad thing, but not the *best* thing." This is Joe's first reference to this book since he saw me buy it twenty-four hours ago. So my mind operated on his in this instance. He said he was sitting yonder in the reading-room, three minutes ago (I have not got up yet), thinking of nothing in particular, and didn't know what brought *Romola* into his head; but into his head it came and that particular passage. Now I, forty feet away, in another room, was reading that particular passage at that particular moment.

> Couldn't suggest *Romola* to him earlier, because nothing in the book had taken hold of me till I came to that one passage on page 112, Tauchnitz edition.

And again:

> The instances of mind-telegraphing are simply innumerable. This evening Joe and I sat long at the edge of the village looking at the Matterhorn. Then Joe said, "We ought to go to the Cervin Hotel and inquire for Livy's telegram." If he had been but one instant later I should have said those words instead of him.

Such entries are frequent, and one day there came along a kind of object-lesson. They were toiling up a mountain-side, when Twichell began telling a very interesting story which had happened in connection with a friend still living, though Twichell had no knowledge of his whereabouts at this time. The story finished just as they rounded a turn in the cliff, and Twichell, looking up, ended his last sentence, "And *there's the man!*" Which was true, for they were face to face with the very man of whom he had been telling.

Another subject that entered into their discussion was the law of accidents. Clemens held that there was no such thing as an accident: that it was all forewritten in the day of the beginning; that every event, however slight, was embryonic in that first instant of created life, and immutably timed to its appearance in the web of destiny. Once on their travels, when they were on a high bank above a brawling stream, a little girl, who started to run toward them, slipped and rolled under the bottom rail of the protecting fence, her feet momentarily hanging out over the precipice and the tearing torrent below. It seemed a miraculous escape from death, and furnished an illustration for their discussion. The condition of the ground, the force of her fall, the nearness of the fatal edge, all these had grown inevitably out of the first great projection of thought, and the child's fall and its escape had been invested in life's primal atom.

The author of *A Tramp Abroad* tells us of the rushing stream that flows out of the Arcadian sky valley, the Gasternthal, and goes plunging down to Kandersteg, and how he took exercise by making "Harris" (Twichell) set stranded logs adrift while he lounged comfortably on a boulder, and watched them go tearing by; also how he made Harris run a race with one of those logs. But that is literature. Twichell, in a letter home, has preserved a likelier and lovelier story:

> Mark is a queer fellow. There is nothing that he so delights in as a swift, strong stream. You can hardly get him to leave one when once he is within the influence of its fascinations. To throw in stones and sticks seems to afford him rapture. To-night, as we were on our way back to the hotel, seeing a lot of driftwood caught by the torrent side below the path, I climbed down and threw it in. When I got back to the path Mark was running down-stream after it as hard as he could go, throwing up his hands and shouting in the wildest ecstasy, and when a piece went over a fall and emerged to view in the foam below he would jump up and down and yell. He said afterward that he hadn't been so excited in three months. He acted just like a boy; another feature of his extreme sensitiveness in certain directions.

Then generalizing, Twichell adds:

> He has coarse spots in him. But I never knew a person so finely regardful of the feelings of others in some ways. He hates to pass another person walking, and will practise some subterfuge to take off what he feels is the discourtesy of it. And he is exceedingly timid, tremblingly timid, about approaching strangers; hates to ask a question. His sensitive regard for others extends to animals. When we are driving his concern is all about the horse. He can't bear to see the whip used, or to see a horse pull hard. To-day, when the driver clucked up his horse and quickened his pace a little, Mark said, "The fellow's got the notion

> that we are in a hurry." He is exceedingly considerate toward me in regard of everything—or most things.

The days were not all sunshine. Sometimes it rained and they took shelter by the wayside, or, if there was no shelter, they plodded along under their umbrellas, still talking away, and if something occurred that Clemens wanted to put down they would stand stock still in the rain, and Twichell would hold the umbrella while Clemens wrote—a good while sometimes—oblivious to storm and discomfort and the long way yet ahead.

After the day on Gemmi Pass Twichell wrote home:

> Mark, to-day, was immensely absorbed in the flowers. He scrambled around and gathered a great variety, and manifested the intensest pleasure in them. He crowded a pocket of his note-book with his specimens and wanted more room. So I stopped the guide and got out my needle and thread, and out of a stiff paper, a hotel advertisement, I had about me made a paper bag, a cornucopia like, and tied it to his vest in front, and it answered the purpose admirably. He filled it full with a beautiful collection, and as soon as we got here to-night he transferred it to a cardboard box and sent it by mail to Livy. A strange Mark he is, full of contradictions. I spoke last night of his sensitiveness to others' feelings. To-day the guide got behind, and came up as if he would like to go by, yet hesitated to do so. Mark paused, went aside and busied himself a minute picking a flower. In the halt the guide got by and resumed his place in front. Mark threw the flower away, saying, "I didn't want that. I only wanted to give the old man a chance to go on without seeming to pass us." Mark is splendid to walk with amid such grand scenery, for he talks so well about it, has such a power of strong, picturesque expression. I wish you might have heard him to-day. His vigorous speech nearly did justice to the things we saw.

In an address which Twichell gave many years later he recalls another pretty incident of their travels. They had been toiling up the Gorner Grat.

As we paused for a rest, a lamb from a flock of sheep near by ventured inquisitively toward us, whereupon Mark seated himself on a rock, and with beckoning hand and soft words tried to get it to come to him.

On the lamb's part it was a struggle between curiosity and timidity, but in a succession of advances and retreats it gained confidence, though at a very gradual rate. It was a scene for a painter: the great American humorist on one side of the game and that silly little creature on the other, with the Matterhorn for a background. Mark was reminded that the time he was consuming was valuable—but to no purpose. The Gorner Grat could wait. He held on with undiscouraged perseverance till he carried his point: the lamb finally put its nose in his hand, and he was happy over it all the rest of the day.

The matter of religion came up now and again in the drift of their discussions. It was Twichell's habit to have prayers in their room every night at the hotels, and Clemens was willing to join in the observances. Once Twichell, finding him in a responsive mood—a remorseful mood—gave his sympathy, and spoke of the larger sympathy of divinity. Clemens listened and seemed soothed and impressed, but his philosophies were too wide and too deep for creeds and doctrines. A day or two later, as they were tramping along in the hot sun, his honesty had to speak out.

"Joe," he said, "I'm going to make a confession. I don't believe in your religion at all. I've been living a lie right straight along whenever I pretended to. For a moment, sometimes, I have been almost a believer, but it immediately drifts away from me again. I don't believe one word of your Bible was inspired by God any more than any other book. I believe it is entirely the work of man from beginning to end—atonement and all. The problem of life and death and eternity and the true conception of God is a bigger thing than is contained in that book."

So the personal side of religious discussion closed between them, and was never afterward reopened.

They joined Mrs. Clemens and the others at Lausanne at last, and their Swiss holiday was over. Twichell set out for home by way of England, and Clemens gave himself up to reflection and rest after his wanderings. Then, as the days of their companionship passed in review, quickly and characteristically he sent a letter after his comrade:

> DEAR OLD JOE,—It is actually all over! I was so low-spirited at the station yesterday, and this morning, when I woke, I couldn't seem to accept the dismal truth that you were really gone, and the pleasant tramping and talking at an end. Ah, my boy! it has been such a rich holiday to me, and I feel under such deep and honest obligations to you for coming. I am putting out of my mind all memory of the times when I misbehaved toward you and hurt you; I am resolved to consider it forgiven, and to store up and remember only the charming hours of the journeys and the times when I was not unworthy to be with you and share a companionship which to me stands first after Livy's. It is justifiable to do this; for why should I let my small infirmities of disposition live and grovel among my mental pictures of the eternal sublimities of the Alps?
>
> Livy can't accept or endure the fact that you are gone. But you *are*, and we cannot get around it. So take our love with you, and bear it also over the sea to Harmony, and God bless you both.
>
> MARK.

CXIX

ITALIAN DAYS

THE Clemens party wandered down into Italy—to the lakes, Venice, Florence, Rome—loitering through the galleries, gathering here and there beautiful furnishings—pictures, marbles, and the like—for the Hartford home.

In Venice they bought an old carven bed, a massive regal affair with serpentine columns surmounted by singularly graceful cupids, and with other cupids sporting on the headboard: the work of some artist who had been dust three centuries maybe, for this bed had come out of an old Venetian palace, dismantled and abandoned. It was a furniture with a long story, and the years would add mightily to its memories. It would become a stately institution in the Clemens household. The cupids on the posts were removable, and one of the highest privileges of childhood would be to occupy that bed and have down one of the cupids to play with. It was necessary to be ill to acquire that privilege—not violently and dangerously ill, but interestingly so—ill enough to be propped up with pillows and have one's meals served on a tray, with dolls and picture-books handy, and among them a beautiful rosewood cupid who had kept dimpled and dainty for so many, many years.

They spent three weeks in Venice: a dreamlike experience, especially for the children, who were on the water most of the time, and became fast friends with their gondolier, who taught them some Italian words; then a week in Florence and a fortnight in Rome.[1] Clemens discovered that in twelve years his attitude had changed somewhat concerning the old masters. He no longer found the bright, new copies an improvement on the originals, though the originals still failed to wake his enthusiasm. Mrs. Clemens and Miss Spaulding spent long hours wandering down avenues of art, accompanied by him on occasion, though not always willingly. He wrote his sorrow to Twichell:

> I do wish you were in Rome to do my sight-seeing for me. Rome interests me as much as East Hartford could, and no more; that is, the Rome which the average tourist feels an interest in. There are other things here which stir me enough to make life worth living. Livy and Clara are having a royal time worshiping the old masters, and I as good a time gritting my ineffectual teeth over them.

Once when Sarah Orne Jewett was with the party he remarked that if the old masters had labeled their fruit one wouldn't be so likely to mistake pears for turnips.

"Youth," said Mrs. Clemens, gravely, "if you do not care for these masterpieces yourself, you might at least consider the feelings of others"; and Miss Jewett, regarding him severely, added, in her quaint Yankee fashion:

"Now, you've been spoke to!"

He felt duly reprimanded, but his taste did not materially reform. He realized that he was no longer in a proper frame of mind to write of general sight-seeing. One must be eager, verdant, to write happily the story of travel. Replying to a letter from Howells on the subject he said:

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[1] From the note-book:

"BAY—When the waiter brought my breakfast this morning I spoke to him in Italian.

"MAMA—What did you say?

"B.—I said, 'Polly-vo fransay.'

"M.—What does it mean?

"B.—I don't know. What *does* it mean, Susy?

"S.—It means, 'Polly wants a cracker.'"

> I wish I *could* give those sharp satires on European life which you mention, but of course a man can't write successful satire except he be in a calm, judicial good-humor; whereas I *hate* travel, and I *hate* hotels, and I *hate* the opera, and I *hate* the old masters. In truth I don't ever seem to be in a good enough humor with anything to satirize it. No, I want to stand up before it and curse it and foam at the mouth, or take a club and pound it to rags and pulp. I have got in two or three chapters about Wagner's operas, and managed to do it without showing temper, but the strain of another such effort would burst me.

Clemens became his own courier for a time in Italy, and would seem to have made more of a success of it than he did a good many years afterward, if we may believe the story he has left us of his later attempt.

"Am a shining success as a courier," he records, "by the use of francs. Have learned how to handle the railway guide intelligently and with confidence."

He declares that he will have no more couriers; but possibly he could have employed one to advantage on the trip out of Italy, for it was a desperately hard one, with bad connections and delayed telegrams. When, after thirty-six hours' weary, continuous traveling, they arrived at last in Munich in a drizzle and fog, and were domiciled in their winter quarters, at No. 1a, Karlstrasse, they felt that they had reached the home of desolation itself, the very throne of human misery.

> And the rooms were *so* small, the conveniences so meager, and the porcelain stove was grim, ghastly, dismal, intolerable! So Livy and Clara Spaulding sat down forlorn and cried, and I retired to a private place to pray. By and by we all retired to our narrow German beds, and when Livy and I had finished talking across the room it was all decided that we should rest

twenty-four hours, then pay whatever damages were required and straightway fly to the south of France.

The rooms had been engaged by letter, months before, of their proprietress, Fräulein Dahlweiner, who had met them at the door with a lantern in her hand, full of joy in their arrival and faith in her ability to make them happy. It was a faith that was justified. Next morning, when they all woke, rested, the weather had cleared, there were bright fires in the rooms, the world had taken on a new aspect. Fräulein Dahlweiner, the pathetic, hard-working little figure, became almost beautiful in their eyes in her efforts for their comfort. She arranged larger rooms and better conveniences for them. Their location was central and there was a near-by park. They had no wish to change. Clemens, in his letter to Howells, boasts that he brought the party through from Rome himself, and that they never had so little trouble before; but in looking over this letter, thirty years later, he commented, "Probably a lie."

He secured a room some distance away for his work, but then could not find his Swiss note-book. He wrote Twichell that he had lost it, and that after all he might not be obliged to write a volume of travels. But the note-book turned up and the work on the new book proceeded. For a time it went badly. He wrote many chapters, only to throw them aside. He had the feeling that he had somehow lost the knack of descriptive narrative. He had become, as it seemed, too didactic. He thought his description was inclined to be too literal, his humor manufactured. These impressions passed, by and by; interest developed, and with it enthusiasm and confidence. In a letter to Twichell he reported his progress:

> I was about to write to my publisher and propose some other book, when the confounded thing [the note-book] turned up, and down went my heart into my boots. But there was now no

excuse, so I went solidly to work, tore up a great part of the MS. written in Heidelberg—wrote and tore up, continued to write and tear up—and at last, reward of patient and noble persistence, my pen got the old swing again! Since then I'm glad that Providence knew better what to do with the Swiss notebook than I did.

Further along in the same letter there breaks forth a true heart-answer to that voice of the Alps which, once heard, is never wholly silent:

O Switzerland! The further it recedes into the enriching haze of time, the more intolerably delicious the charm of it and the cheer of it and the glory and majesty, and solemnity and pathos of it grow. Those mountains had a soul: they thought, they spoke. And what a voice it was! And how real! Deep down in my memory it is sounding yet. Alp calleth unto Alp! That stately old Scriptural wording is the right one for God's Alps and God's ocean. How puny we were in that awful Presence, and how painless it was to be so! How fitting and right it seemed, and how stingless was the sense of our unspeakable insignificance! And Lord, how pervading were the repose and peace and blessedness that poured out of the heart of the invisible Great Spirit of the mountains!

Now what *is* it? There are mountains and mountains and mountains in this world, but only these take you by the heartstrings. I wonder what the secret of it is. Well, time and time and again it has seemed to me that I *must* drop everything and flee to Switzerland once more. It is a *longing*—a deep, strong, tugging *longing*. That is the word. We must go again, Joe.

CXX

IN MUNICH

THAT winter in Munich was not recalled as an unpleasant one in after-years. His work went well enough—always a chief source of gratification. Mrs. Clemens and Miss Spaulding found interest in the galleries, in quaint shops, in the music and picturesque life of that beautiful old Bavarian town. The children also liked Munich. It was easy for them to adopt any new environment or custom. The German Christmas, with its lavish tree and toys and cakes, was an especial delight. The German language they seemed fairly to absorb. Writing to his mother Clemens said:

> I cannot see but that the children speak German as well as they do English. Susy often translates Livy's orders to the servants. I cannot work and study German at the same time; so I have dropped the latter and do not even read the language, except in the morning paper to get the news.

In Munich—as was the case wherever they were known—there were many callers. Most Americans and many foreigners felt it proper to call on Mark Twain. It was complimentary, but it was wearying sometimes. Mrs. Clemens, in a letter written from Venice, where they had received even more than usual attention, declared there were moments when she almost wished she might never see a visitor again.

Originally there was a good deal about Munich in the new book, and some of the discarded chapters might have been retained with advantage. They were ruled out in the final weeding as being too serious, along with the French chapters. Only a few Italian memories were left to follow the Switzerland wanderings.

The book does record one Munich event, though transferring it to Heilsbronn. It is the incident of the finding of the lost sock in the vast bedroom. It may interest the reader to compare what really happened, as set down in a letter to Twichell, with the story as written for publication:

> Last night I awoke at three this morning, and after raging to myself for two interminable hours I gave it up. I rose, assumed a catlike stealthiness, to keep from waking Livy, and proceeded to dress in the pitch-dark. Slowly but surely I got on garment after garment—all down to one sock; I had one slipper on and the other in my hand. Well, on my hands and knees I crept softly around, pawing and feeling and scooping along the carpet, and among chair-legs, for that missing sock, I kept that up, and still kept it up, and *kept* it up. At first I only said to myself, "Blame that sock," but that soon ceased to answer. My expletives grew steadily stronger and stronger, and at last, when I found I was *lost*, I had to sit flat down on the floor and take hold of something to keep from lifting the roof off with the profane explosion that was trying to get out of me. I could see the dim blur of the window, but of course it was in the wrong place and could give me no information as to where I was. But I had one comfort—I had not waked Livy; I believed I could find that sock in silence if the night lasted long enough. So I started again and softly pawed all over the place, and sure enough, at the end of half an hour I laid my hand on the missing article. I rose joyfully up and butted the wash-bowl and pitcher off the stand, and simply raised —— so to speak. Livy screamed, then said, "Who is it? What *is* the matter?" I said, "There ain't anything the matter. I'm hunting for my sock." She said, "Are you hunting for it with a club?"
>
> I went in the parlor and lit the lamp, and gradually the fury subsided and the ridiculous features of the thing began to suggest themselves. So I lay on the sofa with note-book and pencil,

> and transferred the adventure to our big room in the hotel at Heilsbronn, and got it on paper a good deal to my satisfaction.

He wrote with frequency to Howells, and sent him something for the magazine now and then: the "Gambetta Duel" burlesque, which would make a chapter in the book later, and the story of "The Great Revolution in Pitcairn."[1]

Howells's novel, *The Lady of the Aroostook*, was then running through the *Atlantic*, and in one of his letters Clemens expresses the general deep satisfaction of his household in that tale:

> If your literature has not struck perfection now we are not able to see what is lacking. It is all such truth—truth to the life; everywhere your pen falls it leaves a photograph. . . . Possibly you will not be a fully accepted classic until you have been dead one hundred years—it is the fate of the Shakespeares of all genuine professions—but then your books will be as common as Bibles, I believe. In that day I shall be in the encyclopedias too, thus: "Mark Twain, history and occupation unknown; but he was personally acquainted with Howells."

Though in humorous form, this was a sincere tribute. Clemens always regarded with awe William Dean Howells's ability to dissect and photograph with such delicacy the minutiæ of human nature; just as Howells always stood in awe of Mark Twain's ability to light, with a single flashing sentence, the whole human horizon.

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[1] Included in *The Stolen White Elephant* volume. The "Pitcairn" and "Elephant" tales were originally chapters in *A Tramp Abroad;* also the unpleasant "Coffin-box" yarn, which Howells rejected for the *Atlantic* and generally condemned, though for a time it remained a favorite with its author.

CXXI

PARIS, ENGLAND, AND HOMEWARD BOUND

THEY decided to spend the spring months in Paris, so they gave up their pleasant quarters with Fräulein Dahlweiner, and journeyed across Europe, arriving at the French capital February 28, 1879. Here they met another discouraging prospect, for the weather was cold and damp, the cabmen seemed brutally ill-mannered, their first hotel was chilly, dingy, uninviting. Clemens, in his note-book, set down his impressions of their rooms. A paragraph will serve:

> Ten squatty, ugly arm-chairs, upholstered in the ugliest and coarsest conceivable scarlet plush; two hideous sofas of the same—uncounted armless chairs ditto. Five ornamental chairs, seats covered with a coarse rag, embroidered in flat expanse with a confusion of leaves such as no tree ever bore, six or seven a dirty white and the rest a faded red. How those hideous chairs do swear at the hideous sofa near them! This is the very hatefulest room I have seen in Europe.
>
> Oh, how *cold* and raw and unwarmable it is!

It was better than that when the sun came out, and they found happier quarters presently at the Hotel Normandy, rue de l'Échelle.

But, alas, the sun did not come out often enough. It was one of those French springs and summers when it rains nearly every day, and is distressingly foggy and chill between times. Clemens received a bad impression of France and the French during that Parisian sojourn, from which he never entirely recovered. In his note-book he wrote: "France has neither winter, nor summer, nor morals. Apart from these drawbacks it is a fine country."

The weather may not have been entirely accountable for his prejudice, but from whatever cause Mark Twain, to the day of his death, had no great love for the French as a nation. Conversely, the French as a nation did not care greatly for Mark Twain. There were many individual Frenchmen that Mark Twain admired, as there were many Frenchmen who admired the work and personality of Mark Twain; but on neither side was there the warm, fond, general affection which elsewhere throughout Europe he invited and returned.

His book was not yet finished. In Paris he worked on it daily, but without enthusiasm. The city was too noisy, the weather too dismal. His note-book says:

> *May* 7th. I wish this terrible winter would come to an end. Have had rain almost without intermission for two months and one week.
>
> *May* 28th. This is one of the coldest days of this most damnable and interminable winter.

It was not all gloom and discomfort. There was congenial company in Paris, and dinner-parties, and a world of callers. Aldrich the scintillating[1] was there, also Gedney Bunce, of Hartford, Frank Millet and his wife,

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[1] Of Aldrich Clemens used to say: "When Aldrich speaks it seems to me he is the bright face of the moon, and I feel like the other side."

Aldrich, unlike Clemens, was not given to swearing. The Parisian note-book has this memorandum:

"Aldrich gives his seat in the horse-car to a crutched cripple, and discovers that what he took for a crutch is only a length of walnut beading and the man not lame; whereupon Aldrich uses the only profanity that ever escaped his lips: 'Damn a dam'd man who would carry a dam'd piece of beading under his dam'd arm!'"

Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen and his wife, and a Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlain, artist people whom the Clemenses had met pleasantly in Italy. Turgenieff, as in London, came to call; also Baron Tauchnitz, that nobly born philanthropist of German publishers, who devoted his life, often at his personal cost, to making the literature of other nations familiar to his own. Tauchnitz had early published the *Innocents*, following it with other Mark Twain volumes as they appeared, paying always, of his own will and accord, all that he could afford to pay for this privilege; which was not really a privilege, for the law did not require him to pay at all. He traveled down to Paris now to see the author, and to pay his respects to him. "A mighty nice old gentleman," Clemens found him. Richard Whiteing was in Paris that winter, and there were always plenty of young American painters whom it was good to know.

They had what they called the Stomach Club, a jolly organization, whose purpose was indicated by its name. Mark Twain occasionally attended its sessions, and on one memorable evening, when Edwin A. Abbey was there, speeches were made which never appeared in any printed proceedings. Mark Twain's address that night has obtained a wide celebrity among the clubs of the world, though no line of it, or even its title. has ever found its way into published literature.

Clemens had a better time in Paris than the rest of his party. He could go and come, and mingle with the sociabilities when the abnormal weather kept the others housed in. He did a good deal of sight-seeing of his own kind, and once went up in a captive balloon. They were all studying French, more or less, and they read histories and other books relating to France. Clemens renewed his old interest in Joan of Arc, and for the first time appears to have conceived the notion of writing the story of that lovely character.

The Reign of Terror interested him. He reread Carlyle's *Revolution*, a book which he was never long without reading, and they all read *A Tale of Two Cities*. When the weather permitted they visited the scenes of that grim period.

In his note-book he comments:

"The Reign of Terror shows that, without distinction or rank, the people were savages. Marquises, dukes, lawyers, blacksmiths, they each figure in due proportion to their crafts."

And again:

"For 1,000 years this savage nation indulged itself in massacre; every now and then a big massacre or a little one. The spirit is peculiar to France—I mean in Christendom—no other state has had it. In this France has always walked abreast, kept her end up with her brethren, the Turks and the Burmese. Their chief traits—love of glory and massacre."

Yet it was his sense of fairness that made him write, as a sort of quittance:

"You perceive I generalize with intrepidity from single instances. It is the tourists' custom. When I see a man jump from the Vendome Column I say, 'They like to do that in Paris.'"

Following this implied atonement, he records a few conclusions, drawn doubtless from Parisian reading and observation:

"Childish race and great."

"I'm for cremation."

"I disfavor capital punishment."

"Samson was a Jew, therefore not a fool. The Jews have the best average brain of any people in the world. The Jews are the only race in the world who work wholly with their brains, and never with their hands. There are no Jew beggars, no Jew tramps, no Jew ditchers, hod-carriers, day-laborers, or followers of toilsome mechanical trade.

"They are peculiarly and conspicuously the world's intellectual aristocracy."

"Communism is idiocy. They want to divide up the property. Suppose they did it. It requires brains to keep money as well as to make it. In a precious little while the money would be back in the former owner's hands and the communist would be poor again. The division would have to be remade every three years or it would do the communist no good."

A curious thing happened one day in Paris. Boyesen, in great excitement, came to the Normandy and was shown to the Clemens apartments. He was pale and could hardly speak, for his emotion. He asked immediately if his wife had come to their rooms. On learning that she had not, he declared that she was lost or had met with an accident. She had been gone several hours, he said, and had sent no word, a thing which she had never done before. He besought Clemens to aid him in his search for her, to do something to help him find her. Clemens, without showing the least emotion or special concentration of interest, said quietly:

"I will."

"Where will you go first," Boyesen demanded.

Still in the same even voice Clemens said:

"To the elevator."

He passed out of the room, with Boyesen behind him, into the hall. The elevator was just coming up, and as they reached it, it stopped at their landing, and Mrs. Boyesen stepped out. She had been delayed by a breakdown and a blockade. Clemens said afterward that he had a positive conviction that she would be on the elevator when they reached it. It was one of those curious psychic evidences which we find all along during his life; or, if the skeptics prefer to call them coincidences, they are privileged to do so.

PARIS, *June* 1, 1879. Still this vindictive winter continues. Had a raw, cold rain to-day. To-night we sit around a rousing wood fire.

They stood it for another month, and then on the 10th of July, when it was still chilly and disagreeable, they gave it up and left for Brussels, which he calls "a dirty, beautiful (architecturally), interesting town."

Two days in Brussels, then to Antwerp, where they dined on the *Trenton* with Admiral Roan, then to Rotterdam, Dresden, Amsterdam, and London, arriving there the 29th of July, which was rainy and cold, in keeping with all Europe that year.

> Had to keep a rousing big cannel-coal fire blazing in the grate all day. A remarkable summer, truly!

London meant a throng of dinners, as always: brilliant, notable affairs, too far away to recall. A letter written by Mrs. Clemens at the time preserves one charming, fresh bit of that departed bloom.

> Clara [Spaulding] went in to dinner with Mr. Henry James; she enjoyed him very much. I had a little chat with him before dinner, and he was exceedingly pleasant and easy to talk with. I had expected just the reverse, thinking one would feel looked over by him and criticized. Mr. Whistler, the artist, was at the dinner, but he did not attract me. Then there was a lady, over eighty years old, a Mrs. Stuart, who was Washington Irving's love, and she is said to have been his only love, and because of her he went unmarried to his grave.[1] She was also an intimate friend of Madame Bonaparte. You would judge Mrs. Stuart to be about fifty, and she was the life of the drawing-room after dinner, while the ladies were alone, before the gentlemen came up. It was lovely to see such a sweet old age; every one was so fond of her, every one deferred to her, yet every one was joking her, making fun of her, but she was always equal to the occasion, giving back as bright replies as possible; you had not the least sense that she was aged. She quoted French in her stories with perfect ease and fluency, and had all the time such a kindly, lovely way. When she entered the room, before dinner, Mr. James, who was then talking with me, shook hands with her and said, "Good evening, you wonderful lady." After she had passed . . . he said, "She is the youngest person in London. She has the youngest feelings and the youngest interests. . . . She is always interested."
>
> It was a perfect delight to hear her and see her.

For more than two years they had had an invitation from Reginald Cholmondeley to pay him another visit.

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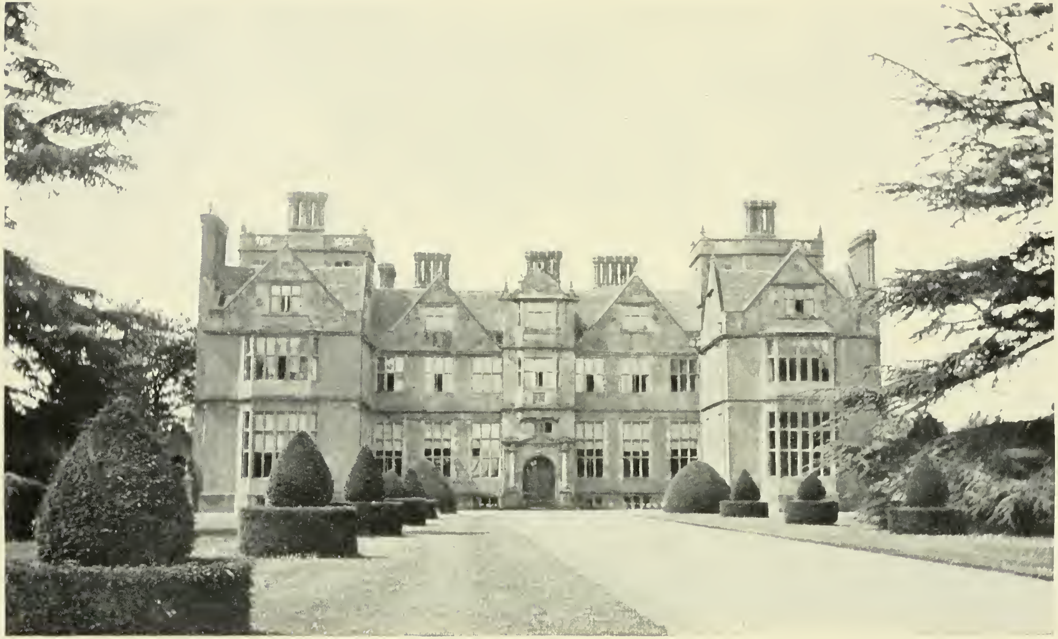
[1] Mrs. Clemens was misinformed. Irving's only "love" was a Miss Hoffman.



CONDOVER HALL

So they went for a week to Condover, where many friends were gathered, including Millais, the painter, and his wife (who had been the wife of Ruskin), numerous relatives, and other delightful company. It was one of the happiest chapters of their foreign sojourn.[1]

From the note-book:

> *Sunday, August* 17, '79. Raw and cold, and a drenching rain. Went to hear Mr. Spurgeon. House three-quarters full—say three thousand people. First hour, lacking one minute, taken up with two prayers, two ugly hymns, and Scripture-reading. Sermon three-quarters of an hour long. A fluent talker, good, sonorous voice. Topic treated in the unpleasant, old fashion: Man a mighty bad child, God working at him in forty ways and having a world of trouble with him.
>
> A wooden-faced congregation; just the sort to see no incongruity in the majesty of Heaven stooping to plead and sentimentalize over such, and see in their salvation an important matter.
>
> *Tuesday, August* 19th. Went up Windermere Lake in the steamer. Talked with the great Darwin.

They had planned to visit Dr. Brown in Scotland. Mrs. Clemens, in particular, longed to go, for his health had not been of the best, and she felt that they would never have a chance to see him again. Clemens in after-years blamed himself harshly for not making the trip, declaring that their whole reason for not going was an irritable reluctance on his part to take the troublesome journey and a perversity of spirit for which there was no real excuse. There is documentary evidence against this harsh conclusion. They were, in fact, delayed here and there by misconnections and the continued terrific weather, barely reaching Liverpool in time for their sailing date, August 23d. Unquestionably he was weary of railway travel, for he always detested it. Time would magnify his remembered reluctance, until, in the end, he would load his conscience with the entire burden of blame.

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[1] Moncure D. Conway, who was in London at the time, recalls, in his *Autobiography*, a visit which he made with Mr. and Mrs. Clemens to Stratford-on-Avon.

"Mrs. Clemens was an ardent Shakespearian, and Mark Twain determined to give her a surprise. He told her that we were going on a journey to Epworth, and persuaded me to connive with the joke by writing to Charles Flower not to meet us himself, but send his carriage. On arrival at the station we directed the driver to take us straight to the church. When we entered, and Mrs. Clemens read on Shakespeare's grave, 'Good friend, for Jesus' sake, forbear,' she started back, exclaiming, 'Where am I?' Mark received her reproaches with an affluence of guilt, but never did lady enjoy a visit more than that to Avonbank. Mrs. Charles Flower (*née* Martineau) took Mrs. Clemens to her heart, and contrived that every social or other attraction of that region should surround her."

Their ship was the *Gallia*, and one night, when they were nearing the opposite side of the Atlantic, Mark Twain, standing on deck, saw for the third time in his experience a magnificent lunar rainbow: a complete arch, the colors part of the time very brilliant, but little different from a day rainbow. It is not given to many persons in this world to see even one of these phenomena. After each previous vision there had come to him a period of good-fortune. Perhaps this also boded well for him.

CXXII

AN INTERLUDE

THE *Gallia* reached New York September 3, 1879. A report of his arrival, in the New York *Sun*, stated that Mark Twain had changed in his absence; that only his drawl seemed natural.

> His hat, as he stood on the deck of the incoming Cunarder, *Gallia*, was of the pattern that English officers wear in India, and his suit of clothes was such as a merchant might wear in his store. He looked older than when he went to Germany, and his hair has turned quite gray.

It was a late hour when they were finally up to the dock, and Clemens, anxious to get through the Custom House, urged the inspector to accept his carefully prepared list of dutiable articles, without opening the baggage. But the official was dubious. Clemens argued eloquently, and a higher authority was consulted. Again Clemens stated his case and presented his arguments. A still higher chief of inspection was summoned, evidently from his bed. He listened sleepily to the preamble, then suddenly said: "Oh, chalk his baggage, of course! Don't you know it's Mark Twain and that he'll talk all night?"

They went directly to the farm, for whose high sunlit loveliness they had been longing through all their days of absence. Mrs. Clemens, in her letters, had never failed to dwell on her hunger for that fair hilltop. From his accustomed study-table Clemens wrote to Twichell:

"You have run about a good deal, Joe, but you have never seen any place that was so divine as the farm. Why don't you come here and take a foretaste of Heaven?" Clemens declared he would roam no more forever, and settled down to the happy farm routine. He took up his work, which had not gone well in Paris, and found his interest in it renewed. In the letter to Twichell he said:

> I am revising my MS. I did not expect to like it, but I do. I have been knocking out early chapters for more than a year now, not because they had not merit, but merely because they hindered the flow of the narrative; it was a dredging process. Day before yesterday my shovel fetched up three more chapters and laid them, reeking, on the festering shore-pile of their predecessors, and now I think the yarn swims right along, without hitch or halt. I believe it will be a readable book of travels. I cannot see that it lacks anything but information.

Mrs. Clemens was no less weary of travel than her husband. Yet she had enjoyed their roaming, and her gain from it had been greater than his. Her knowledge of art and literature, and of the personal geography of nations, had vastly increased; her philosophy of life had grown beyond all counting.

She had lost something, too; she had outstripped her traditions. One day, when she and her sister had walked across the fields, and had stopped to rest in a little grove by a pretty pond, she confessed, timidly enough and not without sorrow, how she had drifted away from her orthodox views. She had ceased to believe, she said, in the orthodox Bible God, who exercised a personal supervision over every human soul. The hordes of people she had seen in many lands, the philosophies she had listened to from her husband and those wise ones about him, the life away from the restricted round of home, all had contributed to this change. Her God had become a larger God; the greater mind which exerts its care of the individual through immutable laws of time and change and environment—the Supreme Good which comprehends the individual flower, dumb creature, or human being only as a unit in the larger scheme of life and love. Her sister was not shocked or grieved; she too had grown with the years, and though perhaps less positively directed, had by a path of her own reached a wider prospect of conclusions. It was a sweet day there in the little grove by the water, and would linger in the memory of both so long as life lasted. Certainly it was the larger faith; though the moment must always come when the narrower, nearer, more humanly protecting arm of orthodoxy lends closer comfort. Long afterward, in the years that followed the sorrow of heavy bereavement, Clemens once said to his wife, "Livy, if it comforts you to lean on the Christian faith do so," and she answered, "I can't, Youth. I haven't any."

And the thought that he had destroyed her illusion, without affording a compensating solace, was one that would come back to him, now and then, all his days.

CXXIII

THE GRANT SPEECH OF 1879

IF the lunar rainbow had any fortuitous significance, perhaps we may find it in the two speeches which Mark Twain made in November and December of that year. The first of these was delivered at Chicago, on the occasion of the reception of General Grant by the Army of the Tennessee, on the evening of November 13, 1879. Grant had just returned from his splendid tour of the world. His progress from San Francisco eastward had been such an ovation as is only accorded to sovereignty. Clemens received an invitation to the reunion, but, dreading the long railway journey, was at first moved to decline. He prepared a letter in which he made "business" his excuse, and expressed his regret that he would not be present to see and hear the veterans of the Army of the Tennessee at the moment when their old commander entered the room and rose in his place to speak.

"Besides," he said, "I wanted to see the General again anyway and renew the acquaintance. He would remember me, because I was the person who did not ask him for an office."

He did not send the letter. Reconsidering, it seemed to him that there was something strikingly picturesque in the idea of a Confederate soldier who had been chased for a fortnight in the rain through Ralls and Monroe counties, Missouri, now being invited to come and give welcome home to his old imaginary pursuer. It was in the nature of an imperative command, which he could not refuse to obey.

He accepted and agreed to speak. They had asked him to respond to the toast of "The Ladies," but for him the subject was worn out. He had already responded to that toast at least twice. He telegraphed that there was one class of the community that had always been overlooked upon such occasions, and that if they would allow him to do so he would take that class for a toast: *the babies.* Necessarily they agreed, and he prepared himself accordingly.

He arrived in Chicago in time for the prodigious procession of welcome. Grant was to witness the march from a grand reviewing stand, which had been built out from the second story of the Palmer House. Clemens had not seen the General since the "embarrassing" introduction in Washington, twelve years before. Their meeting was characteristic enough. Carter Harrison, Mayor of Chicago, arriving with Grant, stepped over to Clemens, and asked him if he wouldn't like to be presented. Grant also came forward, and a moment later Harrison was saying:

"General, let me present Mr. Clemens, a man almost as great as yourself." They shook hands; there was a pause of a moment, then Grant said, looking at him gravely:

"Mr. Clemens, *I* am not embarrassed, are *you?*"

So he remembered that first, long-ago meeting. It was a conspicuous performance. The crowd could not hear the words, but they saw the greeting and the laugh, and cheered both men.

Following the procession, there were certain imposing ceremonies of welcome at Haverly's Theater where long, laudatory eloquence was poured out upon the returning hero, who sat unmoved while the storm of music and cheers and oratory swept about him. Clemens, writing of it that evening to Mrs. Clemens, said:

> I never sat elbow to elbow with so many historic names before. Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, Schofield, Pope, Logan, and so on.

> What an iron man Grant is! He sat facing the house, with his right leg crossed over his left, his right boot sole tilted up at an angle, and his left hand and arm reposing on the arm of his chair. You note that position? Well, when glowing references were made to *other* grandees on the stage, those grandees always showed a trifle of nervous consciousness, and as these references came frequently the nervous changes of position and attitude were also frequent. *But* Grant! He was under a tremendous and ceaseless bombardment of praise and congratulation; but as true as I'm sitting here he never moved a muscle of his body for a single instant during thirty minutes! You could have played him on a stranger for an effigy. Perhaps he never *would* have moved, but at last a speaker made such a particularly ripping and blood-stirring remark about him that the audience rose and roared and yelled and stamped and clapped an entire minute—Grant sitting as serene as ever—when General Sherman stepped up to him, laid his hand affectionately on his shoulder, bent respectfully down, and whispered in his ear. Then Grant got up and bowed, and the storm of applause swelled into a hurricane.

But it was the next evening that the celebration rose to a climax. This was at the grand banquet at the Palmer House, where six hundred guests sat down to dinner and Grant himself spoke, and Logan and Hurlbut, and Vilas and Woodford and Pope, fifteen in all, including Robert G. Ingersoll and Mark Twain. Chicago has never known a greater event than that dinner, for there has never been a time since when those great soldiers and citizens could have been gathered there.

To Howells Clemens wrote:

> Imagine what it was like to see a bullet-shredded old battle-flag reverently unfolded to the gaze of a thousand middle-aged soldiers, most of whom hadn't seen it since they saw it advancing over victorious fields when they were in their prime. And imagine what it was like when Grant, their first commander, stepped into view while they were still going mad over the flag, and then right in the midst of it all somebody struck up "When we were marching through Georgia." Well, you

should have heard the thousand voices lift that chorus and seen the tears stream down. If I live a hundred years I sha'n't ever forget these things, nor be able to talk about them. I sha'n't ever forget that I saw Phil Sheridan, with martial cloak and plumed chapeau, riding his big black horse in the midst of his own cannon; by all odds the superbest figure of a soldier *I* ever looked upon!

Grand times, my boy, grand times!

Mark Twain declared afterward that he listened to four speeches that night which he would remember as long as he lived. One of them was by Emory Storrs, another by General Vilas, another by Logan, and the last and greatest by Robert Ingersoll, whose eloquence swept the house like a flame. The Howells letter continues:

I doubt if America has ever seen anything quite equal to it; I am well satisfied I shall not live to see its equal again. How pale those speeches are in print, but how radiant, how full of color, how blinding they were in the delivery! Bob Ingersoll's music will sing through my memory always as the divinest that ever enchanted my ears. And I shall always see him, as he stood that night on a dinner-table, under the flash of lights and banners, in the midst of seven hundred frantic shouters, the most beautiful human creature that ever lived. "They fought, that a mother might own her child." The words look like any other print, but, Lord bless me! he borrowed the very accent of the angel of mercy to say them in, and you should have seen that vast house rise to its feet; and you should have heard the hurricane that followed. That's the *only* test! People may shout, clap their hands, stamp, wave their napkins, but none but the master can make them *get up on their feet.*

Clemens's own speech came last. He had been placed at the end to hold the house. He was preceded by a dull speaker, and his heart sank, for it was two o'clock and the diners were weary and sleepy, and the dreary speech had made them unresponsive.

They gave him a round of applause when he stepped up upon the table in front of him—a tribute to his name. Then he began the opening words of that memorable, delightful fancy.

"We haven't all had the good-fortune to be ladies; we haven't all been generals, or poets, or statesmen; but when the toast works down to the *babies*—we *stand on common ground*—"

The tired audience had listened in respectful silence through the first half of the sentence. He made one of his effective pauses on the word "*babies*," and when he added, in that slow, rich measure of his, "*we stand on common ground*," they let go a storm of applause. There was no weariness and inattention after that. At the end of each sentence, he had to stop to let the tornado roar itself out and sweep by. When he reached the beginning of the final paragraph, "Among the three or four million cradles now rocking in the land are some which this nation would preserve for ages as sacred things if we could know which ones they are," the vast audience waited breathless for his conclusion. Step by step he led toward some unseen climax—some surprise, of course, for that would be his way. Then steadily, and almost without emphasis, he delivered the opening of his final sentence:

"And now in his cradle, somewhere under the flag, the future illustrious commander-in-chief of the American armies is so little burdened with his approaching grandeurs and responsibilities as to be giving his whole strategic mind, at this moment, to trying to find out some way to get his own big toe into his mouth, an achievement which (meaning no disrespect) the illustrious guest of this evening also turned his attention to some fifty-six years ago."

He paused, and the vast crowd had a chill of fear. After all, he seemed likely to overdo it—to spoil everything with a cheap joke at the end.

No one ever knew better than Mark Twain the value of a pause. He waited now long enough to let the silence become absolute, until the tension was painful, then wheeling to Grant himself he said, with all the dramatic power of which he was master:

"And if the child is but the father of the man, there are mighty few who will *doubt that he succeeded!*"

The house came down with a crash. The linking of their hero's great military triumphs with that earliest of all conquests seemed to them so grand a figure that they went mad with the joy of it. Even Grant's iron serenity broke; he rocked and laughed while the tears streamed down his cheeks.

They swept around the speaker with their congratulations, in their efforts to seize his hand. He was borne up and down the great dining-hall. Grant himself pressed up to make acknowledgments.

"It tore me all to pieces," he said; and Sherman exclaimed, "Lord bless you, my boy! I don't know how you do it!"

The little speech has been in "cold type" so many years since then that the reader of it to-day may find it hard to understand the flame of response it kindled so long ago. But that was another day—and another nation—and Mark Twain, like Robert Ingersoll, knew always his period and his people.

CXXIV

ANOTHER "ATLANTIC" SPEECH

THE December good-fortune was an opportunity Clemens had to redeem himself with the *Atlantic* contingent, at a breakfast given to Dr. Holmes.

Howells had written concerning it as early as October, and the first impulse had been to decline. It would be something of an ordeal; for though two years had passed since the fatal Whittier dinner, Clemens had not been in that company since, and the lapse of time did not signify. Both Howells and Warner urged him to accept, and he agreed to do so on condition that he be allowed to speak.

> If anybody talks there I shall claim the right to say a word myself, and be heard among the very *earliest*, else it would be confoundedly awkward for me—and for the rest, too. But you may read what I say beforehand, and strike out whatever you choose.

Howells advised against any sort of explanation. Clemens accepted this as wise counsel, and prepared an address relevant only to the guest of honor.

It was a noble gathering. Most of the guests of the Whittier dinner were present, and this time there were ladies. Emerson, Longfellow, and Whittier were there, Harriet Beecher Stowe and Julia Ward Howe; also the knightly Colonel Waring, and Stedman, and Parkman, and grand old John Bigelow, old even then.[1]

Howells was conservative in his introduction this time. It was better taste to be so. He said simply:

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[1] He died in 1911 in his 94th year.

"We will now listen to a few words of truth and soberness from Mark Twain."

Clemens is said to have risen diffidently, but that was his natural manner. It probably did not indicate anything of the inner tumult he really felt.

Outwardly he was calm enough, and what he said was delicate and beautiful, the kind of thing that he could say so well. It seems fitting that it should be included here, the more so that it tells a story not elsewhere recorded. This is the speech in full:

Mr. Chairman, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I would have traveled a much greater distance than I have come to witness the paying of honors to Dr. Holmes, for my feeling toward him has always been one of peculiar warmth. When one receives a letter from a great man for the first time in his life it is a large event to him, as all of you know by your own experience. You never can receive letters enough from famous men afterward to obliterate that one or dim the memory of the pleasant surprise it was and the gratification it gave you. Lapse of time cannot make it commonplace or cheap. Well, the first great man who ever wrote me a letter was our guest, Oliver Wendell Holmes. He was also the first great literary man I ever stole anything from, and that is how I came to write to him and he to me. When my first book was new a friend of mine said, "The dedication is very neat." Yes, I said, I thought it was. My friend said, "I always admired it, even before I saw it in *The Innocents Abroad*." I naturally said, "What do you mean? Where did you ever see it before?" "Well, I saw it first, some years ago, as Dr. Holmes's dedication to his *Songs in Many Keys*." Of course my first impulse was to prepare this man's remains for burial, but upon reflection I said I would reprieve him for a moment or two, and give him a chance to prove his assertion if he could. We stepped into a book-store and he did prove it. I had stolen that dedication almost word for word. I could not imagine how this curious thing happened; for I knew one thing, for a dead certainty—that a certain amount of pride always goes along with a teaspoonful of brains, and that this pride protects a man from deliberately stealing other people's ideas.

That is what a *teaspoonful* of brains will do for a man, and admirers had often told me I had nearly a basketful, though they were rather reserved as to the size of the basket. However, I thought the thing out and solved the mystery. Some years before I had been laid up a couple of weeks in the Sandwich Islands, and had read and reread Dr. Holmes's poems till my mental reservoir was filled with them to the brim. The dedication lay on top and handy, so by and by I unconsciously took it. Well, of course, I wrote to Dr. Holmes and told him I hadn't meant to steal, and he wrote back and said, in the kindest way, that it was all right, and no harm done, and added that he believed we all unconsciously worked over ideas gathered in reading and hearing, imagining they were original with ourselves. He stated a truth and did it in such a pleasant way, and salved over my sore spot so gently and so healingly, that I was rather glad I had committed the crime, for the sake of the letter. I afterward called on him and told him to make perfectly free with any ideas of mine that struck him as good protoplasm for poetry. He could see by that time that there wasn't anything mean about me; so we got along, right from the start.[1]

I have met Dr. Holmes many times since; and lately he said— However, I am wandering wildly away from the one thing which I got on my feet to do; that is, to make my compliments to you, my fellow-teachers of the great public, and likewise to say I am right glad to see that Dr. Holmes is still in his prime and full of generous life, and as age is not determined by years but by trouble, and by infirmities of mind and body, I hope it may be a very long time yet before any can truthfully say, "He is growing old."

Whatever Mark Twain may have lost on that former occasion, came back to him multiplied when he had finished this happy tribute. So the year for him closed prosperously. The rainbow of promise was justified.

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[1] Holmes in his letter had said: "I rather think *The Innocents Abroad* will have many more readers than *Songs in Many Keys*. . . . You will be stolen from a great deal oftener than you will borrow from other people."

CXXV

THE QUIETER THINGS OF HOME

UPSET and disturbed as Mark Twain often was, he seldom permitted his distractions to interfere with the program of his fireside. His days and his nights might be fevered, but the evenings belonged to another world. The long European wandering left him more than ever enamoured of his home; to him it had never been so sweet before, so beautiful, so full of peace. Company came: distinguished guests and the old neighborhood circles. Dinner-parties were more frequent than ever, and they were likely to be brilliant affairs. The best minds, the brightest wits, gathered around Mark Twain's table. Booth, Barrett, Irving, Sheridan, Sherman, Howells, Aldrich: they all assembled, and many more. There was always some one on the way to Boston or New York who addressed himself for the day or the night, or for a brief call, to the Mark Twain fireside.

Certain visitors from foreign lands were surprised at his environment, possibly expecting to find him among less substantial, more bohemian surroundings. Henry Drummond, the author of *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, in a letter of this time, said:

> I had a delightful day at Hartford last Wednesday. . . . Called on Mark Twain, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, and the widow of Horace Bushnell. I was wishing A—— had been at the Mark Twain interview. He is funnier than any of his books, and to my surprise a most respected citizen, devoted to things esthetic, and the friend of the poor and struggling.[1]

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[1] *Life of Henry Drummond*, by George Adam Smith.

The quieter evenings were no less delightful. Clemens did not often go out. He loved his own home best. The children were old enough now to take part in a form of entertainment that gave him and them especial pleasure —acting charades. These he invented for them, and costumed the little performers, and joined in the acting as enthusiastically and as unrestrainedly as if he were back in that frolicsome boyhood on John Quarles's farm. The Warner and Twichell children were often there and took part in the gay amusements. The children of that neighborhood played their impromptu parts well and naturally. They were in a dramatic atmosphere, and had been from infancy. There was never any preparation for the charades. A word was selected and the parts of it were whispered to the little actors. Then they withdrew to the hall, where all sorts of costumes had been laid out for the evening, dressed their parts, and each detachment marched into the library, performed its syllable and retired, leaving the audience, mainly composed of parents, to guess the answer. Often they invented their own words, did their own costuming, and conducted the entire performance independent of grown-up assistance or interference. Now and then, even at this early period, they conceived and produced little plays, and of course their father could not resist joining in these. At other times, evenings, after dinner, he would sit at the piano and recall the old darky songs—spirituals and jubilee choruses—singing them with fine spirit, if not with perfect technic, the children joining in these moving melodies.

He loved to read aloud to them. It was his habit to read his manuscript to Mrs. Clemens, and, now that the children were older, he was likely to include them in his critical audience.

It would seem to have been the winter after their return from Europe that this custom was inaugurated, for *The Prince and the Pauper* manuscript was the first one so read, and it was just then he was resuming work on this tale. Each afternoon or evening, when he had finished his chapter, he assembled his little audience and read them the result. The children were old enough to delight in that half real, half fairy tale of the wandering prince and the royal pauper: and the charm and simplicity of the story are measurably due to those two small listeners, to whom it was adapted in that early day of its creation.

Clemens found the *Prince* a blessed relief from *A Tramp Abroad*, which had become a veritable nightmare. He had thought it finished when he left the farm, but discovered that he must add several hundred pages to complete its bulk. It seemed to him that he had been given a life-sentence. He wrote six hundred pages and tore up all but two hundred and eighty-eight. He was about to destroy these and begin again, when Mrs. Clemens's health became poor and he was advised to take her to Elmira, though it was then midwinter. To Howells he wrote:

> I said, "if there is one death that is painfuler than another, may I get it if I don't do that thing."
>
> So I took the 288 pages to Bliss and told him that was the very last line I should ever write on this book (a book which required 2,600 pages of MS., and I have written nearly four thousand, first and last).
>
> I am as soary (and flighty) as a rocket to-day, with the unutterable joy of getting that Old Man of the Sea off my back, where he has been roosting more than a year and a half.

They remained a month at Elmira, and on their return Clemens renewed work on *The Prince and the Pauper*. He reported to Howells that if he never sold a copy his jubilant delight in writing it would suffer no diminution. A week later his enthusiasm had still further increased:

> I take so much pleasure in my story that I am loath to hurry, not wanting to get it done. Did I ever tell you the plot of it? It begins at 9 A.M., January 27, 1547.

He follows with a detailed synopsis of his plot, which in this instance he had worked out with unusual completeness—a fact which largely accounts for the unity of the tale. Then he adds:

> My idea is to afford a realizing sense of the exceeding severity of the laws of that day by inflicting some of their penalties upon the king himself, and allowing him a chance to see the rest of them applied to others; all of which is to account for certain mildnesses which distinguished Edward VI.'s reign from those that precede it and follow it.
>
> Imagine this fact: I have even fascinated Mrs. Clemens with this yarn for youth. My stuff generally gets considerable damning with faint praise out of her, but this time it is all the other way. She is become the horse-leech's daughter, and my mill doesn't grind fast enough to suit her. This is no mean triumph, my dear sir.

He forgot, perhaps, to mention his smaller auditors, but we may believe they were no less eager in their demands for the tale's continuance.

CXXVI

"A TRAMP ABROAD"

A *TRAMP ABROAD* came from the presses on the 13th of March, 1880. It had been widely heralded, and there was an advance sale of twenty-five thousand copies. It was of the same general size and outward character as the *Innocents*, numerously illustrated, and was regarded by its publishers as a satisfactory book.

It bore no very striking resemblance to the *Innocents* on close examination. Its pictures—drawn, for the most part, by a young art student named Brown, whom Clemens had met in Paris—were extraordinarily bad, while the crude engraving process by which they had been reproduced, tended to bring them still further into disrepute. A few drawings by True Williams were better, and those drawn by Clemens himself had a value of their own. The book would have profited had there been more of what the author calls his "works of art."

Mark Twain himself had dubious anticipations as to the book's reception. But Howells wrote:

> Well, you are a blessing. You ought to believe in God's goodness, since he has bestowed upon the world such a delightful genius as yours to lighten its troubles.

Clemens replied:

> Your praises have been the greatest uplift I ever had. When a body is not even remotely expecting such things, how the surprise takes the breath away! We had been interpreting your stillness to melancholy and depression, caused by that book.

This is honest. Why, everything looks brighter now. A check for untold cash could not have made our hearts sing as your letter has done.

A letter from Tauchnitz, proposing to issue an illustrated edition in Germany, besides putting it into his regular series, was an added satisfaction. To be in a Tauchnitz series was of itself a recognition of the book's merit.

To Twichell, Clemens presented a special copy of the *Tramp* with a personal inscription, which must not be omitted here:

My dear "Harris"—no, I mean My dear Joe,—Just imagine it for a moment: I was collecting material in Europe during fourteen months for a book, and now that the thing is printed I find that you, who were with me only a month and a half of the fourteen, are in *actual* presence (not imaginary) in 440 of the 531 pages the book contains! Hang it, if you had stayed at home it would have taken me fourteen *years* to get the material. You have saved me an intolerable whole world of hated labor, and I'll not forget it, my boy.

You'll find reminders of things, all along, that happened to us, and of others that didn't happen; but you'll remember the spot where they were invented. You will see how the imaginary perilous trip up the Riffelberg is preposterously expanded. That horse-student is on page 192. The "Fremersberg" is neighboring. The Black Forest novel is on page 211. I remember when and where we projected that: in the leafy glades with the mountain sublimities dozing in the blue haze beyond the gorge of Allerheiligen. There's the "new member," page 213; the dentist yarn, 223; the true Chamois, 242; at page 248 is a pretty long yarn, spun from a mighty brief text—meeting, for a moment, that pretty girl who knew me and whom I had forgotten; at 281 is "Harris," and should have been so entitled, but Bliss has made a mistake and turned you into some other character; 305 brings back the whole Rigi tramp to me at a glance; at 185 and 186 are specimens of my art; and the frontispiece is the combination which I made by pasting one familiar picture over the lower half of an equally familiar one. This fine work being worthy of Titian, I have shed the credit of it upon him. Well, you'll find more reminders of things scattered through here than are printed, or could have been printed, in many books.

All the "legends of the Neckar," which I invented for that unstoried region, are here; one is in the Appendix. The steel portrait of me is just about perfect.

We had a mighty good time, Joe, and the six weeks I would dearly like to repeat *any* time; but the rest of the fourteen months—*never*. With love,

Yours, MARK.

Hartford, March 16, 1880.

Possibly Twichell had vague doubts concerning a book of which he was so large a part, and its favorable reception by the critics and the public generally was a great comfort. When the Howells letter was read to him he is reported as having sat with his hands on his knees, his head bent forward—a favorite attitude—repeating at intervals:

"Howells said that, did he? Old Howells said that!"

There have been many and varying opinions since then as to the literary merits of *A Tramp Abroad*. Human tastes differ, and a "mixed" book of this kind invites as many opinions as it has chapters. The word "uneven" pretty safely describes any book of size, but it has a special application to this one. Written under great stress and uncertainty of mind, it could hardly be uniform. It presents Mark Twain at his best, and at his worst. Almost any American writer was better than Mark Twain at his worst: Mark Twain at his best was unapproachable.

It is inevitable that *A Tramp Abroad* and *The Innocents Abroad* should be compared, though with hardly the warrant of similarity. The books are as different as was their author at the periods when they were written. *A Tramp Abroad* is the work of a man who was traveling and observing for the purpose of writing a book, and for no other reason. *The Innocents Abroad* was written by a man who was reveling in every scene and experience, every new phase and prospect; whose soul was alive to every historic association, and to every humor that a gay party of young sight-seers could find along the way. The note-books of that trip fairly glow with the inspiration of it; those of the later wanderings are mainly filled with brief, terse records, interspersed with satire and denunciation. In the *Innocents* the writer is the enthusiast with a sense of humor. In the *Tramp* he has still the sense of humor, but he has become a cynic; restrained, but a cynic none the less. In the *Innocents* he laughs at delusions and fallacies—and enjoys them. In the *Tramp* he laughs at human foibles and affectations — and wants to smash them. Very often he does not laugh heartily and sincerely at all, but finds his humor in extravagant burlesque. In later life his gentler laughter, his old, untroubled enjoyment of human weakness, would return, but just now he was in that middle period, when the "damned human race" amused him indeed, though less tenderly. (It seems proper to explain that in applying this term to mankind he did not mean that the race was foredoomed, but rather that it ought to be.)

Reading the *Innocents*, the conviction grows that, with all its faults, it is literature from beginning to end. Reading the *Tramp*, the suspicion arises that, regardless of technical improvement, its percentage of literature is not large. Yet, as noted in an earlier volume, so eminent a critic as Brander Matthews has pronounced in its favor, and he undoubtedly had a numerous following; Howells expressed his delight in the book at the time of its issue, though one wonders how far the personal element entered into his enjoyment, and what would be his final decision if he read the two books side by side to-day. He reviewed *A Tramp Abroad* adequately and finely in the

Atlantic, and justly; for on the whole it is a vastly entertaining book, and he did not overpraise it.

A Tramp Abroad had an "Introduction" in the manuscript, a pleasant word to the reader but not a necessary one, and eventually it was omitted. Fortunately the appendix remained. Beyond question it contains some of the very best things in the book. The descriptions of the German *Portier* and the German newspaper are happy enough, and the essay on the awful German language is one of Mark Twain's supreme bits of humor. It is Mark Twain at his best; Mark Twain in a field where he had no rival, the field of good-natured, sincere fun-making—ridicule of the manifest absurdities of some national custom or institution which the nation itself could enjoy, while the individual suffered no wound. The present Emperor of Germany is said to find comfort in this essay on his national speech when all other amusements fail. It is delicious beyond words to express; it is unique.

In the body of the book there are also many delights. The description of the ant might rank next to the German language almost in its humor, and the meeting with the unrecognized girl at Lucerne has a lively charm.

Of the serious matter, some of the word-pictures are flawless in their beauty; this, for instance, suggested by the view of the Jungfrau from Interlaken:

> There was something subduing in the influence of that silent and solemn and awful presence; one seemed to meet the immutable, the indestructible, the eternal, face to face, and to feel the trivial and fleeting nature of his own existence the more sharply by the contrast. One had the sense of being under the brooding contemplation of a spirit, not an inert mass of rocks and ice—a spirit which had looked down, through the slow drift of ages, upon a million vanished races of men and judged them; and would judge a million more—and still be there, watching unchanged and unchangeable, after all life should be gone and the earth have become a vacant desolation.

> While I was feeling these things, I was groping, without knowing it, toward an understanding of what the spell is which people find in the Alps, and in no other mountains; that strange, deep, nameless influence which, once felt, cannot be forgotten; once felt, leaves always behind it a restless longing to feel it again—a longing which is like homesickness; a grieving, haunting yearning, which will plead, implore, and persecute till it has its will. I met dozens of people, imaginative and unimaginative, cultivated and uncultivated, who had come from far countries and roamed through the Swiss Alps year after year—they could not explain why. They had come first, they said, out of idle curiosity, because everybody talked about it; they had come since because they could not help it, and they should keep on coming, while they lived, for the same reason; they had tried to break their chains and stay away, but it was futile; now they had no desire to break them. Others came nearer formulating what they felt; they said they could find perfect rest and peace nowhere else when they were troubled: all frets and worries and chafings sank to sleep in the presence of the benignant serenity of the Alps; the Great Spirit of the mountain breathed his own peace upon their hurt minds and sore hearts, and healed them; they could not think base thoughts or do mean and sordid things here, before the visible throne of God.

Indeed, all the serious matter in the book is good. The reader's chief regret is likely to be that there is not more of it. The main difficulty with the humor is that it seems overdone. It is likely to be carried too far and continued too long. The ascent of Riffelberg is an example. Though spotted with delights it seems, to one reader at least, less admirable than other of the book's important features, striking, as it does, more emphatically the chief note of the book's humor—that is to say, exaggeration.

Without doubt there must be many—very many—who agree in finding a fuller enjoyment in *A Tramp Abroad* than in the *Innocents*; only, the burden of the world's opinion lies the other way. The world has a weakness for its illusions: the splendor that falls on castle walls, the glory of the hills at evening, the pathos of the days that are no more. It answers to tenderness, even on the page of humor, and to genuine enthusiasm, sharply sensing the lack of these things; instinctively resenting, even when most amused by it, extravagance and burlesque. *The Innocents Abroad* is more soul-satisfying than its successor, more poetic; more sentimental, if you will. The *Tramp* contains better English usage, without doubt, but it is less full of happiness and bloom and the halo of romance. The heart of the world has felt this, and has demanded the book in fewer numbers.[1]

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[1] The sales of the *Innocents* during the earlier years more than doubled those of the *Tramp* during a similar period. The later ratio of popularity is more nearly three to one. It has been repeatedly stated that in England the *Tramp* has the greater popularity, an assertion not sustained by the publisher's accountings.

CXXVII

LETTERS, TALES, AND PLANS

THE reader has not failed to remark the great number of letters which Samuel Clemens wrote to his friend William Dean Howells; yet comparatively few can even be mentioned. He was always writing to Howells, on every subject under the sun; whatever came into his mind—business, literature, personal affairs—he must write about it to Howells. Once, when nothing better occurred, he sent him a series of telegrams, each a stanza from an old hymn, possibly thinking they might carry comfort.[1] Whatever of picturesque happened in the household he immediately set it down for Howells's entertainment. Some of these domestic incidents carry the flavor of his best humor. Once he wrote:

> Last night, when I went to bed, Mrs. Clemens said, "George didn't take the cat down to the cellar; Rosa says he has left it shut up in the conservatory." So I went down to attend to Abner (the cat). About three in the morning Mrs. C. woke me and said, "I do believe I hear that cat in the drawing-room. What did you do with him?" I answered with the confidence of a man who has managed to do the right thing for once, and said,

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[1] "Clemens had then and for many years the habit of writing to me about what he was doing, and still more of what he was experiencing. Nothing struck his imagination, in or out of the daily routine, but he wished to write me of it, and he wrote with the greatest fullness and a lavish dramatization, sometimes to the length of twenty or forty pages." (*My Mark Twain*, by W. D. Howells.)

"I opened the conservatory doors, took the library off the alarm, and spread everything open, so that there wasn't any obstruction between him and the cellar." Language wasn't capable of conveying this woman's disgust. But the sense of what she said was, "He couldn't have done any harm in the conservatory; so you must go and make the entire house free to him and the burglars, imagining that he will prefer the coal-bins to the drawing-room. If you had had Mr. Howells to help you I should have admired, but not have been astonished, because I should know that *together* you would be equal to it; but how you managed to contrive such a stately blunder all by yourself is what I cannot understand."

So, you see, even *she* knows how to apprecaite our gifts. . . .

I knocked off during these stirring hours, and don't intend to go to work again till we go away for the summer, four or six weeks hence. So I am writing to you, not because I have anything to say, but because you don't have to answer and I need something to do this afternoon.

The rightful earl has—

Friday, 7th.

Well, never mind about the rightful earl; he merely wanted to borrow money. I never knew an American earl that didn't.

After a trip to Boston, during which Mrs. Clemens did some bric-à-brac shopping, he wrote:

Mrs. Clemens has two imperishable topics now: the museum of andirons which she collected and your dinner. It is hard to tell which she admires the most. Sometimes she leans one way and sometimes the other; but I lean pretty steadily toward the dinner because I can appreciate that, whereas I am no prophet in andirons. There has been a procession of Adams Express wagons filing before the door all day delivering andirons.

In a more serious vein he refers to the aged violinist Ole Bull and his wife, whom they had met during their visit, and their enjoyment of that gentle-hearted pair.

Clemens did some shorter work that spring, most of which found its way into the *Atlantic*. "Edward Mills and George Benton," one of the contributions of this time, is a moral sermon in its presentation of a pitiful human spectacle and misdirected human zeal.

It brought a pack of letters of approval, not only from laity, but the church, and in some measure may have helped to destroy the silly sentimentalism which manifested itself in making heroes of spectacular criminals. That fashion has gone out, largely. Mark Twain wrote frequently on the subject, though never more effectively than in this particular instance. "Mrs. McWilliams and the Lightning" was another *Atlantic* story, a companion piece to "Mrs. McWilliams's Experience with the Membranous Croup," and in the same delightful vein—a vein in which Mark Twain was likely to be at his best—the transcription of a scene not so far removed in character from that in the "cat" letter just quoted; something which may or may not have happened, but might have happened, approximately as set down. Rose Terry Cooke wrote:

> Horrid man, how did you know the way I behave in a thunderstorm? Have you been secreted in the closet or lurking on the shed roof? I hope you got thoroughly rained on; and worst of all is that you made me laugh at myself; my real terrors turned round and grimaced at me: they were sublime, and you have made them ridiculous. Just come out here another year and have four houses within a few rods of you struck and then see if you write an article of such exasperating levity. I really hate you, but you are funny.

In addition to his own work, he conceived a plan for Orion. Clemens himself had been attempting, from time to time, an absolutely faithful autobiography; a document in which his deeds and misdeeds, even his moods and inmost thoughts, should be truly set down. He had found it an impossible task. He confessed freely that he lacked the courage, even the actual ability, to pen the words that would lay his soul bare, but he believed Orion equal to the task. He knew how rigidly honest he was, how ready to confess his shortcomings, how eager to be employed at some literary occupation. It was Mark Twain's belief that if Orion would record in detail his long, weary struggle, his succession of attempts and failures, his past dreams and disappointments, along with his sins of omission and commission, it would make one of those priceless human documents such as have been left by Benvenuto Cellini, Cazenova, and Rousseau.

"Simply tell your story to yourself," he wrote, "laying all hideousness utterly bare, reserving nothing. Banish the idea of the audience and all hampering things."

Orion, out in Keokuk, had long since abandoned the chicken farm and a variety of other enterprises. He had prospected insurance, mining, journalism, his old trade of printing, and had taken down and hung up his law shingle between each of these seizures. Aside from business, too, he had been having a rather spectacular experience. He had changed his politics three times (twice in one day), and his religion as many more. Once when he was delivering a political harangue in the street, at night, a parade of the opposition (he had but just abandoned them) marched by carrying certain flaming transparencies, which he himself had made for them the day before. Finally, after delivering a series of infidel lectures, he had been excommunicated and condemned to eternal flames by the Presbyterian Church. He was therefore ripe for any new diversion, and the *Autobiography* appealed to him. He set about it with splendid enthusiasm, wrote a hundred pages or so of his childhood with a startling minutiæ of detail and frankness, and mailed them to his brother for inspection.

They were all that Mark Twain had expected; more than he had expected. He forwarded them to Howells with great satisfaction, suggesting, with certain excisions, they be offered anonymously to the *Atlantic* readers.

But Howells's taste for realism had its limitations. He found the story interesting—indeed, torturingly, heart-wringingly so—and, advising strongly against its publication, returned it.

Orion was steaming along at the rate of ten to twenty pages a day now, forwarding them as fast as written, while his courage was good and the fires warm. Clemens, receiving a package by every morning mail, soon lost interest, then developed a hunted feeling, becoming finally desperate. He wrote wildly to shut Orion off, urging him to let his manuscript accumulate, and to send it in one large consignment at the end. This Orion did, and it is fair to say that in this instance at least he stuck to his work faithfully to the bitter, disheartening end. And it would have been all that Mark Twain had dreamed it would be, had Orion maintained the simple narrative spirit of its early pages. But he drifted off into theological byways; into discussions of his excommunication and infidelities, which were frank enough, but lacked human interest.

In old age Mark Twain once referred to Orion's autobiography in print and his own disappointment in it, which he attributed to Orion's having departed from the idea of frank and unrestricted confession to exalt himself as a hero—a statement altogether unwarranted, and due to one of those curious confusions of memory and imagination that more than once resulted in a complete reversal of the facts. A quantity of Orion's manuscript has been lost and destroyed, but enough fragments of it remain to show its fidelity to the original plan. It is just one long record of fleeting hope, futile effort, and humiliation. It is the story of a life of disappointment; of a man who has been defeated and beaten down and crushed by the world until he has nothing but confession left to surrender.[1]

Whatever may have been Mark Twain's later impression of his brother's manuscript, its story of failure and disappointment moved him to definite action at the time.

Several years before, in Hartford, Orion had urged him to make his publishing contracts on a basis of half profits, instead of on the royalty plan. Clemens, remembering this, had insisted on such an arrangement for the publication of *A Tramp Abroad*, and when his first statement came in he realized that the new contract was very largely to his advantage. He remembered Orion's anxiety in the matter, and made it now a valid excuse for placing his brother on a firm financial footing.

> Out of the suspicions which you bred in me years ago has grown this result, to wit: that I shall within the twelve months get $40,000 out of this *Tramp*, instead of $20,000. $20,000, after taxes and other expenses are stripped away, is worth to the investor about $75 a month, so I shall tell Mr. Perkins [his lawyer and financial agent] to make your check that amount per month hereafter. . . . This ends the loan business, and hereafter you can reflect that you are living not on borrowed money, but on money which you have squarely earned, and which has no taint or savor of charity about it, and you can also reflect that the money which you have been receiving of me is charged against the heavy bill which the next publisher will have to stand who gets a book of mine.

From that time forward Orion Clemens was worth substantially twenty thousand dollars till the day of his death, and, after him, his widow. Far better was it for him that the endowment be conferred in the form of an income, than had the capital amount been placed in his hands.

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[1] Howells, in his letter concerning the opening chapters, said that they would some day make good material. Fortunately the earliest of these chapters were preserved, and, as the reader may remember, furnished much of the childhood details for this biography.

CXXVIII

MARK TWAIN'S ABSENT-MINDEDNESS

A NUMBER of amusing incidents have been more or less accurately reported concerning Mark Twain's dim perception of certain physical surroundings, and his vague resulting memories—his absent-mindedness, as we say.

It was not that he was inattentive—no man was ever less so if the subject interested him—but only that the casual, incidental thing seemed not to find a fixed place in his deeper consciousness.

By no means was Mark Twain's absent-mindedness a development of old age. On the two occasions following he was in the very heyday of his mental strength. Especially was it, when he was engaged upon some absorbing or difficult piece of literature, that his mind seemed to fold up and shut most of the world away. Soon after his return from Europe, when he was still struggling with *A Tramp Abroad*, he wearily put the manuscript aside, one day, and set out to invite F. G. Whitmore over for a game of billiards. Whitmore lived only a little way down the street, and Clemens had been there time and again. It was such a brief distance that he started out in his slippers and with no hat. But when he reached the corner where the house, a stone's-throw away, was in plain view he stopped. He did not recognize it. It was unchanged, but its outlines had left no impress upon his mind. He stood there uncertainly a little while, then returned and got the coachman, Patrick McAleer, to show him the way.

The second, and still more picturesque instance, belongs also to this period. One day, when he was playing billiards with Whitmore, George, the butler, came up with a card.

"Who is he, George?" Clemens asked, without looking at the card.

"I don't know, suh, but he's a gentleman, Mr. Clemens."

"Now, George, how many times have I told you I don't want to see strangers when I'm playing billiards! This is just some book agent, or insurance man, or somebody with something to sell. I don't want to see him, and I'm not going to."

"Oh, but this is a gentleman, I'm sure, Mr. Clemens. Just look at his card, suh."

"Yes, of course, I see—nice engraved card—but I don't know him, and if it was St. Peter himself I wouldn't buy the key of salvation! You tell him so—tell him—*oh, well,* I suppose I've got to go and get rid of him myself. I'll be back in a minute, Whitmore."

He ran down the stairs, and as he got near the parlor door, which stood open, he saw a man sitting on a couch with what seemed to be some framed water-color pictures on the floor near his feet.

"Ah, ha!" he thought, "I see. A picture agent. I'll soon get rid of him."

He went in with his best, "Well, what can I do for you?" air, which he, as well as any man living, knew how to assume; a friendly air enough, but not encouraging. The gentleman rose and extended his hand.

"How are you, Mr. Clemens?" he said.

Of course this was the usual thing with men who had axes to grind or goods to sell. Clemens did not extend a very cordial hand. He merely raised a loose, indifferent hand—a discouraging hand.

"And how is Mrs. Clemens?" asked the uninvited guest.

So this was his game. He would show an interest in the family and ingratiate himself in that way; he would be asking after the children next.

"Well—Mrs. Clemens is about as usual—I believe."

"And the children—Miss Susie and little Clara?"

This was a bit startling. He knew their names! Still, that was easy to find out. He was a smart agent, wonderfully smart. He must be got rid of.

"The children are well, quite well, and" (pointing down at the pictures)—"We've got plenty like these. We don't want any more. No, we don't care for any more," skilfully working his visitor toward the door as he talked.

The man, looking nonplussed—a good deal puzzled—allowed himself to be talked into the hall and toward the front door. Here he paused a moment:

"Mr. Clemens, will you tell me where Mr. Charles Dudley Warner lives?"

This was the chance! He would work him off on Charlie Warner. Perhaps Warner needed pictures.

"Oh, certainly, *certainly!* Right across the yard. I'll show you. There's a walk right through. You don't need to go around the front way at all. You'll find him at home, too, I'm pretty sure"; all the time working his caller out and down the step and in the right direction.

The visitor again extended his hand.

"Please remember me to Mrs. Clemens and the children."

"Oh, certainly, certainly, with pleasure. Good day. Yes, that's the house. Good-by."

On the way back to the billiard-room Mrs. Clemens called to him. She was ill that day.

"Youth!"

"Yes, Livy." He went in for a word.

"George brought me Mr. B——'s card. I hope you were very nice to him; the B——s were so nice to us, once last year, when you were gone."

"The B——s— Why, Livy—''

"Yes, of course, and I asked him to be sure to call when he came to Hartford."

He gazed at her helplessly.

"Well, he's been here."

"Oh, Youth, have you done anything?"

"Yes, of course I have. He seemed to have some pictures to sell, so I sent him over to Warner's. I noticed he didn't take them with him. Land sakes, Livy, what can I do?"

"Which way did he go, Youth?"

"Why, I sent him to Charlie Warner's. I thought—"

"Go right after him. Go quick! Tell him what you have done."

He went without further delay, bareheaded and in his slippers, as usual. Warner and B—— were in cheerful and friendly converse. They had met before. Clemens entered gaily:

"Oh yes, I see! You found him all right. Charlie, we met Mr. B—— and his wife in Europe last summer and they made things pleasant for us. I wanted to come over here *with* him, but was a good deal occupied just then. Livy isn't very well, but she seems a good deal better, so I just followed along to have a good talk, all together."

He stayed an hour, and whatever bad impression had formed in B——'s mind faded long before the hour ended. Returning home Clemens noticed the pictures still on the parlor floor.

"George," he said, "what pictures are those that gentleman left?"

"Why, Mr. Clemens, those are our *own* pictures. I've been straightening up the room a little, and Mrs. Clemens had me set them around to see how they would look in new places. The gentleman was looking at them while he was waiting for you to come down."

CXXIX

FURTHER AFFAIRS AT THE FARM

IT was at Elmira, in July (1880), that the third little girl came—Jane Lampton, for her grandmother, but always called Jean. She was a large, lovely baby, robust and happy. When she had been with them a little more than a month Clemens, writing to Twichell, said:

> DEAR OLD JOE,—Concerning Jean Clemens, if anybody said he "didn't see no p'ints about that frog that's any better'n any other frog," I should think he was convicting himself of being a pretty poor sort of observer. She is the comeliest and daintiest and perfectest little creature the continents and archipelagos have seen since the Bay and Susy were her size. I will not go into details; it is not necessary; you will soon be in Hartford, where I have already hired a hall; the admission fee will be but a trifle.
>
> It is curious to note the change in the stock-quotations of the Affection Board brought about by throwing this new security on the market. Four weeks ago the children still put Mama at the head of the list right along, where she had always been. But now:
>
> Jean
> Mama
> Motley }
> Fräulein } cats
> Papa
>
> That is the way it stands now. Mama is become No. 2; I have dropped from No. 4, and am become No. 5. Some time ago it used to be nip and tuck between me and the cats, but after the cats "developed" I didn't stand any more show.

> Been reading *Daniel Webster's Private Correspondence.* Have read a hundred of his diffuse, conceited, "eloquent," bathotic (or bathostic) letters, written in that dim (no, vanished) past, when he was a student. And Lord! to think that this boy, who is so real to me now, and so booming with fresh young blood and bountiful life, and sappy cynicisms about girls, has since climbed the Alps of fame and stood against the sun one brief, tremendous moment with the world's eyes on him, and then—*fzt!* where is he? Why, the only *long* thing, the only real thing about the whole shadowy business, is the sense of the lagging dull and hoary lapse of time that has drifted by since then; a vast, empty level, it seems, with a formless specter glimpsed fitfully through the smoke and mist that lie along its remote verge.
>
> Well, we are all getting along here first-rate. Livy gains strength daily and sits up a deal; the baby is five weeks old and—But no more of this. Somebody may be reading *this* letter eighty years hence. And so, my friend (you pitying snob, I mean, who are holding this yellow paper in your hand in 1960), save yourself the trouble of looking further. I know how pathetically trivial our small concerns would seem to you, and I will not let your eye profane them. No, I keep my news; you keep your compassion. Suffice it you to know, scoffer and ribald, that the little child is old and blind now, and once more toothless; and the rest of us are shadows these many, many years. Yes, and *your* time cometh!
>
> MARK.

It is the ageless story. He too had written his youthful letters, and later had climbed the Alps of fame and was still outlined against the sun. Happily, the little child was to evade that harsher penalty — the unwarranted bitterness and affront of a lingering, palsied age.

Mrs. Clemens, in a letter somewhat later, set down a thought similar to his:

"We are all going so fast. Pretty soon we shall have been dead a hundred years."

Clemens varied his work that summer, writing alternately on *The Prince and the Pauper* and on the story about Huck Finn, which he had begun four years earlier.

He read the latter over and found in it a new interest. It did not fascinate him, as did the story of the wandering prince. He persevered only as the spirit moved him, piling up pages on both the tales.

He always took a boy's pride in the number of pages he could complete at a sitting, and if the day had gone well he would count them triumphantly, and, lighting a fresh cigar, would come tripping down the long stair that led to the level of the farm-house, and, gathering his audience, would read to them the result of his industry; that is to say, he proceeded with the story of the *Prince*. Apparently he had not yet acquired confidence or pride enough in poor Huck to exhibit him, even to friends.

The reference (in the letter to Twichell) to the cats at the farm introduces one of the most important features of that idyllic resort. There were always cats at the farm. Mark Twain himself dearly loved cats, and the children inherited this passion. Susy once said:

"The difference between papa and mama is, that mama loves morals and papa loves cats."

The cats did not always remain the same, but some of the same ones remained a good while, and were there from season to season, always welcomed and adored. They were commendable cats, with such names as Fräulein, Blatherskite, Sour Mash, Stray Kit, Sin, and Satan, and when, as happened now and then, a vacancy occurred in the cat census there followed deep sorrow and elaborate ceremonies.

Naturally, there would be stories about cats: impromptu bedtime stories, which began anywhere and ended nowhere, and continued indefinitely through a land inhabited only by cats and dreams. One of these stories, as remembered and set down later, began:

> Once upon a time there was a noble, big cat whose christian name was Catasaqua, because she lived in that region; but

> she didn't have any surname, because she was a short-tailed cat, being a manx, and didn't need one. It is very just and becoming in a long-tailed cat to have a surname, but it would be very ostentatious, and even dishonorable, in a manx. Well, Catasaqua had a beautiful family of catlings; and they were of different colors, to harmonize with their characters. Cattaraugus, the eldest, was white, and he had high impulses and a pure heart; Catiline, the youngest, was black, and he had a self-seeking nature, his motives were nearly always base, he was truculent and insincere. He was vain and foolish, and often said that he would rather be what he was, and live like a bandit, yet have none above him, than be a cat-o'-nine-tails and eat with the king.

And so on without end, for the audience was asleep presently and the end could wait.

There was less enthusiasm over dogs at Quarry Farm. Mark Twain himself had no great love for the canine breed. To a woman who wrote, asking for his opinion on dogs, he said, in part:

> By what right has the dog come to be regarded as a "noble" animal? The more brutal and cruel and unjust you are to him the more your fawning and adoring slave he becomes; whereas, if you shamefully misuse a cat once she will always maintain a dignified reserve toward you afterward—you can never get her full confidence again.

He was not harsh to dogs; occasionally he made friends with them. There was once at the farm a gentle hound, named Bones, that for some reason even won his way into his affections. Bones was always a welcome companion, and when the end of summer came, and Clemens, as was his habit, started down the drive ahead of the carriage, Bones, half-way to the entrance, was waiting for him. Clemens stooped down, put his arms around him, and bade him an affectionate good-by. He always recalled Bones tenderly, and mentioned him in letters to the farm.

CXXX

COPYRIGHT AND OTHER FANCIES

THE continued assault of Canadian pirates on his books kept Mark Twain's interest sharply alive on the subject of copyright reform. He invented one scheme after another, but the public mind was hazy on the subject, and legislators were concerned with purposes that interested a larger number of voters. There were too few authors to be of much value at the polls, and even of those few only a small percentage were vitally concerned. For the others, foreign publishers rarely paid them the compliment of piracy, while at home the copyright limit of forty-two years was about forty-two times as long as they needed protection. Bliss suggested a law making the selling of pirated books a penal offense, a plan with a promising look, but which came to nothing.

Clemens wrote to his old friend Rollin M. Daggett, who by this time was a Congressman. Daggett replied that he would be glad to introduce any bill that the authors might agree upon, and Clemens made at least one trip to Washington to discuss the matter, but it came to nothing in the end. It was a Presidential year, and it would do just as well to keep the authors quiet by promising to do something next year. Any legislative stir is never a good thing for a campaign.

Clemens's idea for copyright betterment was not a fixed one. Somewhat later, when an international treaty which would include protection for authors was being discussed, his views had undergone a change. He wrote, asking Howells:

> Will the proposed treaty protect us (and effectually) against Canadian piracy? Because, if it doesn't, there is not a single argument in favor of international copyright which a rational American Senate could entertain for a moment. My notions have mightily changed lately. I can buy *Macaulay's History*, three vols., bound, for $1.25; *Chambers's Cyclopædia*, ten vols., cloth, for $7.25 (we paid $60), and other English copyrights in proportion; I can buy a lot of the great copyright classics, in paper, at from three cents to thirty cents apiece. These things must find their way into the very kitchens and hovels of the country. A generation of this sort of thing ought to make this the most intelligent and the best-read nation in the world. International copyright must becloud this sun and bring on the former darkness and dime-novel reading.
>
> Morally this is all wrong; governmentally it is all right. For it is the duty of governments and families to be selfish, and look out simply for their own. International copyright would benefit a few English authors and a lot of American publishers, and be a profound detriment to twenty million Americans; it would benefit a dozen American authors a few dollars a year, and there an end. The *real* advantages all go to English authors and American publishers.
>
> And even if the treaty *will* kill Canadian piracy, and thus save me an average of $5,000 a year, I'm down on it anyway, and I'd like cussed well to write an article opposing the treaty.

It is a characteristic expression. Mark Twain might be first to grab for the life-preserver, but he would also be first to hand it to a humanity in greater need. He could damn the human race competently, but in the final reckoning it was the interest of that race that lay closest to his heart.

Mention has been made in an earlier chapter of Clemens's enthusiasms or "rages" for this thing and that which should benefit humankind. He was seldom entirely without them. Whether it was copyright legislation, the latest invention, or a new empiric practice, he rarely failed to have a burning interest in some anodyne that would provide physical or mental easement for his species. Howells tells how once he was going to save the human race with accordion letter-files—the system of order which would grow out of this useful device being of such nerve and labor saving proportions as to insure long life and happiness to all. The fountain-pen, in its first imperfect form, must have come along about the same time, and Clemens was one of the very earliest authors to own one. For a while it seemed that the world had known no greater boon since the invention of printing; but when it clogged and balked, or suddenly deluged his paper and spilled in his pocket, he flung it to the outer darkness. After which, the stylographic pen. He tried one, and wrote severally to Dr. Brown, to Howells, and to Twichell, urging its adoption. Even in a letter to Mrs. Howells he could not forget his new possession:

> And speaking of Howells, he ought to use the stylographic pen, the best fountain-pen yet invented; he *ought* to, but of course he won't—a blamed old sodden-headed conservative—but you see yourself what a nice, clean, uniform MS. it makes.

And at the same time to Twichell:

> I am writing with a stylographic pen. It takes a royal amount of cussing to make the thing go the first few days or a week, but by that time the dullest ass gets the hang of the thing, and after that no enrichments of expression are required, and said ass finds the stylographic a geniune God's blessing. I carry one in each breeches pocket, and both loaded. I'd give you one of them if I had you where I could teach you how to use it —not otherwise. For the average ass flings the thing out of the window in disgust the second day, believing it hath no virtue, no merit of any sort; whereas the lack lieth in himself, God of his mercy damn him.

It was not easy to withstand Mark Twain's enthusiasm. Howells, Twichell, and Dr. Brown were all presently struggling and swearing (figuratively) over their stylographic pens, trying to believe that salvation lay in their conquest. But in the midst of one letter, at last, Howells broke down, seized his old steel weapon, and wrote savagely: "No white man ought to use a stylographic pen, anyhow!" Then, with the more ancient implement, continued in a calmer spirit.

It was only a little later that Clemens himself wrote:

> You see I am trying a new pen. I stood the stylograph as long as I could, and then retired to the pencil. The thing I am trying now is that fountain-pen which is advertised to employ and accommodate itself to any kind of pen. So I selected an ordinary gold pen—a limber one—and sent it to New York and had it cut and fitted to this thing. It goes very well indeed—thus far; but doubtless the devil will be in it by to-morrow.

Mark Twain's schemes were not all in the line of human advancement; some of them were projected, primarily at least, for diversion. He was likely at any moment to organize a club, a sort of private club, and at the time of which we are writing he proposed what was called the "Modest" Club. He wrote to Howells about it:

> At present I am the only member, and as the modesty required must be of a quite aggravated type the enterprise did seem for a time doomed to stop dead still with myself, for lack of further material; but on reflection I have come to the conclusion that you are eligible. Therefore, I have held a meeting and voted to offer you the distinction of membership. I do not know that we can find any others, though I have had some thought of Hay, Warner, Twichell, Aldrich, Osgood, Fields, Higginson, and a few more, together with Mrs. Howells, Mrs. Clemens, and certain others of the sex. I have long felt there ought to be an organized gang of our kind.

He appends the by-laws, the main ones being:

> The object of the club shall be to eat and talk.
>
> Qualification for membership shall be aggravated modesty, unobtrusiveness, native humility, learning, talent, intelligence, unassailable character.
>
> There shall be no officers except a president, and any member who has anything to eat and talk about may constitute himself president for the time being.
>
> Any brother or sister of the order finding a brother or a sister in imminently deadly peril shall forsake his own concerns, no matter at what cost, and call the police.
>
> Any member knowing anything scandalous about himself shall immediately inform the club, so that they shall call a meeting and have the first chance to talk about it.

It was one of his whimsical fancies, and Howells replied that he would like to join it, only that he was too modest —that is, too modest to confess that he was modest enough for membership.

He added that he had sent a letter, with the rules, to Hay, but doubted his modesty. He said:

"He will think he has a right to belong as much as you or I."

Howells agreed that his own name might be put down, but the idea seems never to have gone any further. Perhaps the requirements of membership were too severe.

CXXXI

WORKING FOR GARFIELD

EIGHTEEN hundred and eighty was a Presidential year. General Garfield was nominated on the Republican ticket (against General Hancock), and Clemens found him satisfactory.

> Garfield suits me thoroughly and exactly [he wrote Howells]. I prefer him to Grant('s friends). The Presidency can't add anything to Grant; he will shine on without it. It is ephemeral; he is eternal.

That was the year when the Republican party became panicky over the disaffection in its ranks, due to the defeat of Grant in the convention, and at last, by pleadings and promises, conciliated Platt and Conkling and brought them into the field. General Grant also was induced to save the party from defeat, and made a personal tour of oratory for that purpose. He arrived in Hartford with his family on the 16th of October, and while his reception was more or less partizan, it was a momentous event. A vast procession passed in review before him, and everywhere houses and grounds were decorated. To Mrs. Clemens, still in Elmira, Clemens wrote:

> I found Mr. Beals hard at work in the rain with his decorations. With a ladder he had strung flags around our bedroom balcony, and thence around to the porte-cochère, which was elaborately flagged; thence the flags of all nations were suspended from a line which stretched past the greenhouse to the

> limit of our grounds. Against each of the two trees on the mound, half-way down to our gate, stands a knight in complete armor. Piles of still-bundled flags clutter up the ombra (to be put up), also gaudy shields of various shapes (arms of this and other countries), also some huge glittering arches and things done in gold and silver paper, containing mottoes in big letters. I broke Mr. Beals's heart by persistently and inflexibly annulling and forbidding the biggest and gorgeousest of the arches—it had on it, in all the fires of the rainbow, "The Home of Mark Twain," in letters as big as your head. Oh, we're going to be decorated sufficient, don't you worry about that, madam.

Clemens was one of those delegated to receive Grant and to make a speech of welcome. It was a short speech but an effective one, for it made Grant laugh. He began:

"I am among those deputed to welcome you to the sincere and cordial hospitalities of Hartford, the city of the historic and revered Charter Oak, of which most of the town is built." He seemed to be at loss what to say next, and, leaning over, pretended to whisper to Grant; then, as if he had obtained the information he wanted, he suddenly straightened up and poured out the old-fashioned eulogy on Grant's achievements, adding, in an aside, as he finished:

"I nearly forgot that part of my speech," which evoked roars of laughter from the assembly and a grim smile from Grant. He spoke of Grant as being out of public employment, with private opportunities closed against him, and added, "But your country will reward you, never fear."

Then he closed:

> When Wellington won Waterloo, a battle about on a level with any one of a *dozen* of *your* victories, sordid England tried to pay him for that service with wealth and grandeurs. She made him a duke and gave him $4,000,000. If you had done and suffered for any other country what you have done and suffered for your own you would have been affronted in the same

> sordid way. But, thank God! this vast and rich and mighty republic is imbued to the core with a delicacy which will forever preserve her from so degrading you.
>
> Your country *loves* you—your country's *proud* of you—your country is *grateful* to you. Her applauses, which have been many, thundering in your ears all these weeks and months, will never cease while the flag you saved continues to wave.
>
> Your country stands ready from this day forth to testify her measureless love and pride and gratitude toward you in every conceivable—*inexpensive* way. Welcome to Hartford, great soldier, honored statesman, unselfish citizen.

Grant's grim smile showed itself more than once during the speech, and when Clemens reached the sentence that spoke of his country rewarding him in "every conceivable—*inexpensive* way" his composure broke up completely and he "nearly laughed his entire head off," according to later testimony, while the spectators shouted their approval.

Grant's son, Col. Fred Grant,[1] dined at the Clemens home that night, and Rev. Joseph Twichell and Henry C. Robinson. Twichell's invitation was in the form of a telegram. It said:

> I want you to dine with us Saturday half past five and meet Col. Fred Grant. No ceremony. Wear the same shirt you always wear.

The campaign was at its height now, and on the evening of October 26th there was a grand Republican rally at the opera-house with addresses by Charles Dudley Warner, Henry C. Robinson, and Mark Twain. It was an unpleasant, drizzly evening, but the weather had no effect on their audience. The place was jammed and packed, the aisles, the windows, and the gallery railings full. Hundreds who came as late as the hour announced for the opening were obliged to turn back, for the building had been thronged long before. Mark Twain's speech that night is still remembered in Hartford as the greatest effort of his life. It was hardly that, except to those who were caught in the psychology of the moment, the tumult and the shouting of patriotism, the surge and sweep of the political tide. The roaring delight of the audience showed that to them at least it was convincing. Howells wrote that he had read it twice, and that he could not put it out of his mind. Whatever its general effect was need not now be considered. Garfield was elected, and perhaps Grant's visit to Hartford and the great mass-meeting that followed contributed their mite to that result.

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[1] Maj.-Gen'l, U. S. Army, 1906. Died April, 1912.

Clemens saw General Grant again that year, but not on political business. The Educational Mission, which China had established in Hartford—a thriving institution for eight years or more—was threatened now by certain Chinese authorities with abolishment. Yung Wing (a Yale graduate), the official by whom it had been projected and under whose management it had prospered, was deeply concerned, as was the Rev. Joseph Twichell, whose interest in the mission was a large and personal one. Yung Wing declared that if influence could be brought upon Li Hung Chang, then the most influential of Chinese counselors, the mission might be saved. Twichell, remembering the great honors which Li Hung Chang had paid to General Grant in China, also Grant's admiration of Mark Twain, went to the latter without delay. Necessarily Clemens would be enthusiastic, and act promptly. He wrote to Grant, and Grant replied by telegraph, naming a day when he would see them in New York.

They met at the Fifth Avenue Hotel. Grant was in fine spirits, and by no means the "silent man" of his repute.

> He launched at once into as free and flowing talk as I have ever heard [says Twichell], marked by broad and intelligent

views on the subject of China, her wants, disadvantages, etc. Now and then he asked a question, but kept the lead of the conversation. At last he proposed, of his own accord, to write a letter to Li Hung Chang, advising the continuance of the Mission, asking only that I would prepare him some notes, giving him points to go by. Thus we succeeded easily beyond our expectations, thanks, very largely, to Clemens's assistance.

Clemens wrote Howells of the interview, detailing at some length Twichell's comical mixture of delight and chagrin at not being given time to air the fund of prepared statistics with which he had come loaded. "It was as if he had come to borrow a dollar and had been offered a thousand before he could unfold his case."

CXXXII

A NEW PUBLISHER

IT was near the end of the year that Clemens wrote to his mother:

> I have two stories, and by the verbal agreement they are both going into the same book; but Livy says they're not, and by George I. she ought to know. She says they're going into separate books, and that one of them is going to be elegantly gotten up, even if the elegance of it eats up the publisher's profits and mine too.
>
> I anticipate that publisher's melancholy surprise when he calls here Tuesday. However, let him suffer; it is his own fault. People who fix up agreements with me without first finding out what Livy's plans are take their fate into their own hands.
>
> I said *two* stories, but one of them is only half done; two or three months' work on it yet. I shall tackle it Wednesday or Thursday; that is, if Livy yields and allows both stories to go in one book, which I hope she won't.

The reader may surmise that the finished story—the highly regarded story—was *The Prince and the Pauper*. The other tale—the unfinished and less considered one—was *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Nobody appears to have been especially concerned about Huck, except, possibly, the publisher.

The publisher was not the American Company. Elisha Bliss, after long ill health, had died that fall, and this fact, in connection with a growing dissatisfaction over the earlier contracts, had induced Clemens to listen to offers from other makers of books. The revelation made by the "half-profit" returns from *A Tramp Abroad* meant to him, simply that the profits had not been fairly apportioned, and he was accordingly hostile. To Orion he wrote that, had Bliss lived, he would have remained with the company and made it reimburse him for his losses, but that as matters stood he would sever the long connection. It seemed a pity, later, that he did this, but the break was bound to come. Clemens was not a business man, and Bliss was not a philanthropist. He was, in fact, a shrewd, capable publisher, who made as good a contract as he could; yet he was square in his dealings, and the contract which Clemens held most bitterly against him —that of *Roughing It*—had been made in good faith and in accordance with the conditions of that period. In most of the later contracts Clemens himself had named his royalties, and it was not in human nature—*business* human nature—for Bliss to encourage the size of these percentages. If one wished to draw a strictly moral conclusion from the situation, one might say that it would have been better for the American Publishing Company, knowing Mark Twain, voluntarily to have allowed him half profits, which was the spirit of his old understanding even if not the letter of it, rather than to have waited till he demanded it and then to lose him by the result. Perhaps that would be also a proper business deduction; only, as a rule, business morals are regulated by the contract, and the contract is regulated by the necessities and the urgency of demand.

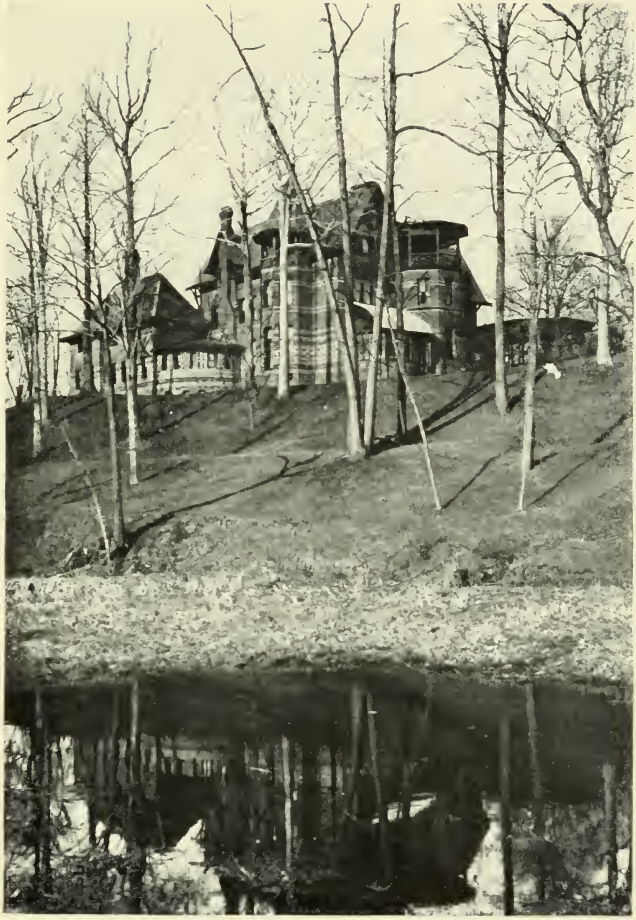
Never mind. Mark Twain revised *The Prince and the Pauper*, sent it to Howells, who approved of it mightily (though with reservations as to certain chapters), and gave it to James R. Osgood, who was grateful and agreed to make it into a book upon which no expense for illustration or manufacture should be spared. It was to be a sort of partnership arrangement as between author and publisher, and large returns were anticipated.

Among the many letters which Clemens was just then writing to Howells one was dated "Xmas Eve." It closes with the customary pleasantries and the final line:

"But it is growing dark. Merry Christmas to all of you!"

That last was a line of large significance. It meant that the air was filled with the whisper of hovering events and that he must mingle with the mystery of preparation. Christmas was an important season in the Clemens home. Almost the entire day before, Patrick was out with the sleigh, delivering food and other gifts in baskets to the poor, and the home preparations were no less busy. There was always a tree—a large one—and when all the gifts had been gathered in—when Elmira and Fredonia had delivered their contributions, and Orion and his wife in Keokuk had sent the annual sack of hickory-nuts (the big river-bottom nuts, big as a silver dollar almost, such nuts as few children of this later generation ever see)—when all this happy revenue had been gathered, and the dusk of Christmas Eve had hurried the children off to bed, it was Mrs. Clemens who superintended the dressing of the tree, her husband assisting, with a willingness that was greater than his skill, and with a boy's anticipation in the surprise of it next morning.

Then followed the holidays, with parties and dances and charades, and little plays, with the Warner and Twichell children. To the Clemens home the Christmas season brought all the old round of juvenile happiness—the spirit of kindly giving, the brightness and the merry-making, the gladness and tenderness and mystery that belong to no other season, and have been handed down through all the ages since shepherds watched on the plains of Bethlehem.



ONE VIEW OF THE HARTFORD HOUSE

CXXXIII

THE THREE FIRES—SOME BENEFACTIONS

THE tradition that fires occur in groups of three was justified in the Clemens household that winter. On each of three successive days flames started that might have led to ghastly results.

The children were croupy, and one morning an alcohol lamp near little Clara's bed, blown by the draught, set fire to the canopy. Rosa, the nurse, entered just as the blaze was well started. She did not lose her presence of mind,[1] but snatched the little girl out of danger, then opened the window and threw the burning bedding on the lawn. The child was only slightly scorched, but the escape was narrow enough.

Next day little Jean was lying asleep in her crib, in front of an open wood fire, carefully protected by a fire-screen, when a spark, by some ingenuity, managed to get through the mesh of the screen and land on the crib's lace covering. Jean's nurse, Julia, arrived to find the lace a gust of flame and the fire spreading. She grabbed the sleeping Jean and screamed. Rosa, again at hand, heard the scream, and rushing in once more opened a window and flung out the blazing bedclothes. Clemens himself also arrived, and together they stamped out the fire.

On the third morning, just before breakfast-time, Susy was practising at the piano in the school-room, which adjoined the nursery. At one end of the room a fire of large logs was burning. Susy was at the other end of the room, her back to the fire. A log burned in two and fell, scattering coals around the woodwork which supported the mantel. Just as the blaze was getting fairly started a barber, waiting to trim Mr. Clemens's hair, chanced to look in and saw what was going on. He stepped into the nursery bath-room, brought a pitcher of water and extinguished the flames. This period was always referred to in the Clemens household as the "three days of fire."

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[1] Rosa was not the kind to lose her head. Once, in Europe, when Bay had crept between the uprights of a high balustrade, and was hanging out over destruction, Rosa, discovering her, did not scream but spoke to her playfully and lifted her over into safety.

Clemens would naturally make philosophical deductions from these coincidental dangers and the manner in which they had been averted. He said that all these things were comprehended in the first act of the first atom; that, but for some particular impulse given in that remote time, the alcohol flame would not have blown against the canopy, the spark would not have found its way through the screen, the log would not have broken apart in that dangerous way, and that Rosa and Julia and the barber would not have been at hand to save precious life and property. He did not go further and draw moral conclusions as to the purpose of these things: he never drew conclusions as to purpose. He was willing to rest with the event. Logically he did not believe in reasons for things, but only that things *were*.

Nevertheless, he was always trying to change them; to have a hand in their improvement. Had you asked him, he would have said that this, too, was all in the primal atom; that his nature, such as it was, had been minutely embodied there.

In that charming volume, *My Mark Twain*, Howells tells us of Clemens's consideration, and even tenderness, for the negro race and his effort to repair the wrong done by his nation. Mark Twain's writings are full of similar evidence, and in his daily life he never missed an opportunity to pay tribute to the humbler race. He would go across the street to speak to an old negro, and to take his hand. He would read for a negro church when he would have refused a cathedral. Howells mentions the colored student whose way through college Clemens paid as a partial reparation "due from every white man to every black man."[1] This incident belongs just to the period of which we are now writing, and there is another which, though different enough, indicates the same tendency.

Garfield was about to be inaugurated, and it was rumored that Frederick Douglass might lose his position as Marshal of the District of Columbia. Clemens was continually besought by one and another to use his influence with the Administration, and in every case had refused. Douglass had made no such application. Clemens, learning that the old negro's place was in danger, interceded for him of his own accord. He closed his letter to General Garfield:

> A simple citizen may express a desire, with all propriety, in the matter of recommendation to office, and so I beg permission to hope that you will retain Mr. Douglass in his present office of Marshal of the District of Columbia, if such a course will not clash with your own preferences or with the expediencies and interests of your Administration. I offer this petition with peculiar pleasure and strong desire, because I so honor this man's high and blemishless character, and so admire his brave, long crusade for the liberties and elevation of his race.
>
> He is a personal friend of mine, but that is nothing to the point; his history would move me to say these things without that, and I feel them, too.

---

[1] Mark Twain paid two colored students through college. One of them, educated in a Southern institution, became a minister of the gospel. The other graduated from the Yale Law School.

Douglass wrote to Clemens, thanking him for his interest; at the end he said:

> I think if a man is mean enough to want an office he ought to be noble enough to ask for it, and use all honorable means of getting it. I mean to ask, and I will use your letter as a part of my petition. It will put the President-elect in a good humor, in any case, and that is very important.
>
> With great respect,
> Gratefully yours,
> FREDERICK DOUGLASS.

Mark Twain's benefactions were not all for the colored race. One morning in February of this same year, while the family were at late breakfast, George came in to announce "a lady waiting to see Mr. Clemens in the drawing-room." Clemens growled.

"George," he said, "it's a book agent. I won't see her. I'll die in my tracks first."

He went, fuming and raging inwardly, and began at once to ask the nature of the intruder's business. Then he saw that she was very young and modest, with none of the assurance of a canvasser, so he gave her a chance to speak. She told him that a young man employed in Pratt & Whitney's machine-shops had made a statue in clay, and would like to have Mark Twain come and look at it and see if it showed any promise of future achievement. His name, she said, was Karl Gerhardt, and he was her husband. Clemens protested that he knew nothing about art, but the young woman's manner and appearance (she seemed scarcely more than a child) won him. He wavered, and finally promised that he would come the first chance he had; that in fact he would come some time during the next week. On her suggestion he agreed to come early in the week; he specified Monday, "without fail."

When she was gone, and the door shut behind her, his usual remorse came upon him. He said to himself:

"Why didn't I go *now?* Why didn't I *go* with her *now?*"

She went from Clemens's over to Warner's. Warner also resisted, but, tempted beyond his strength by her charm, laid down his work and went at once. When he returned he urged Clemens to go without fail, and, true to promise, Clemens took Patrick, the coachman, and hunted up the place. Clemens saw the statue, a semi-nude, for which the young wife had posed, and was struck by its evident merit. Mrs. Gerhardt told him the story of her husband's struggles between his daily work and the effort to develop his talent. He had never had a lesson, she said; if he could only have lessons what might he not accomplish?

Mrs. Clemens and Miss Spaulding called next day, and were equally carried away with Karl Gerhardt, his young wife, and his effort to win his way in art. Clemens and Warner made up their minds to interest themselves personally in the matter, and finally persuaded the painter J. Wells Champney to come over from New York and go with them to the Gerhardts' humble habitation, to see his work. Champney approved of it. He thought it well worth while, he said, for the people of Hartford to go to the expense of Gerhardt's art education. He added that it would be better to get the judgment of a sculptor. So they brought over John Quincy Adams Ward, who, like all the others, came away bewitched with these young people and their struggles for the sake of art. Ward said:

"If any stranger had told me that this 'prentice did not model that thing from plaster-casts I should not have believed it. It's full of crudities, but it's full of genius, too. Hartford must send him to Paris for two years; then, if the promise holds good, keep him there three more."

When he was gone Mrs. Clemens said:

"Youth, we won't wait for Hartford to do it. It would take too long. Let us send the Gerhardts to Paris ourselves, and say nothing about it to any one else."

So the Gerhardts, provided with funds and an arrangement that would enable them to live for five years in Paris if necessary, were started across the sea without further delay.

Clemens and his wife were often doing something of this sort. There was seldom a time that they were not paying the way of some young man or woman through college, or providing means and opportunity for development in some special field of industry.

CXXXIV

LITERARY PROJECTS AND A MONUMENT TO ADAM

MARK TWAIN'S literary work languished during this period. He had a world of plans, as usual, and wrote plentifully, but without direction or conclusion. "A Curious Experience," which relates a circumstance told to him by an army officer, is about the most notable of the few completed manuscripts of this period.

Of the books projected (there were several), a burlesque manual of etiquette would seem to have been the most promising. Howells had faith in it, and of the still remaining fragments a few seem worth quoting:

AT BILLIARDS

If your ball glides along in the intense and immediate vicinity of the object-ball, and a count seems exquisitely imminent, lift one leg; then one shoulder; then squirm your body around in sympathy with the direction of the moving ball; and at the instant when the ball seems on the point of colliding throw up both of your arms violently. Your cue will probably break a chandelier, but no matter; you have done what you could to help the count.

AT THE DOG-FIGHT

If it occur in your block, courteously give way to strangers desiring a view, particularly ladies.

Avoid showing partiality toward the one dog, lest you hurt the feelings of the other one.

Let your secret sympathies and your compassion be always with the under dog in the fight—this is magnanimity; but bet on the other one—this is business.

AT POKER

If you draw to a flush and fail to fill, do not continue the conflict.

If you hold a pair of trays, and your opponent is blind, and it costs you fifty to see him, let him remain unperceived.

If you hold nothing but ace high, and by some means you know that the other man holds the rest of the aces, and he calls, excuse yourself; let him call again another time.

WALL STREET

If you live in the country, buy at 80, sell at 40. Avoid all forms of eccentricity.

IN THE RESTAURANT

When you wish to get the waiter's attention, do not sing out "*Say!*" Simply say "*Sztl!*"

His old abandoned notion of "Hamlet" with an added burlesque character came back to him and stirred his enthusiasm anew, until even Howells manifested deep interest in the matter. One reflects how young Howells must have been in those days; how full of the joy of existence; also how mournfully he would consider such a sacrilege now.

Clemens proposed almost as many things to Howells as his brother Orion proposed to him. There was scarcely a letter that didn't contain some new idea, with a request for advice or co-operation. Now it was some book that he meant to write some day, and again it would be a something that he wanted Howells to write.

Once he urged Howells to make a play, or at least a novel, out of Orion. At another time he suggested as material the "Rightful Earl of Durham."

> He is a perfectly stunning literary bonanza, and *must* be dug up and put on the market. You must get his entire biography out of him and have it ready for Osgood's magazine. Even if it isn't worth printing, you must have it anyway, and use it one of these days in one of your stories or in a play.

It was this notion about *The American Claimant* which somewhat later would lead to a collaboration with Howells on a drama, and eventually to a story of that title.

But Clemens's chief interest at this time lay in publishing, rather than in writing. His association with Osgood inspired him to devise new ventures of profit. He planned a *Library of American Humor*, which Howells (soon to leave the *Atlantic*) and "Charley" Clark[1] were to edit, and which Osgood would publish, for subscription sale. Without realizing it, Clemens was taking his first step toward becoming his own publisher. His contract with Osgood for *The Prince and the Pauper* made him essentially that, for by the terms of it he agreed to supply all the money for the making of the book, and to pay Osgood a royalty of seven and one-half per cent. for selling it, reversing the usual conditions. The contract for the *Library of Humor* was to be a similar one, though in this case Osgood was to have a larger royalty return, and to share proportionately in the expense and risk. Mark Twain was entering into a field where he did not belong; where in the end he would harvest only disaster and regret.

One curious project came to an end in 1881—the plan for a monument to Adam. In a sketch written a great many years later Mark Twain tells of the memorial which the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher and himself once proposed to erect to our great common ancestor. The story is based on a real incident. Clemens, in Elmira one day (it was October, 1879), heard of a jesting proposal made by F. G. Hall to erect a monument in Elmira to Adam. The idea promptly caught Mark Twain's fancy. He observed to Beecher that the human race really showed a pretty poor regard for its great progenitor, who was about to be deposed by Darwin's simian, not to pay him the tribute of a single monument. Mankind, he said, would probably accept the monkey ancestor, and in time the very name of Adam would be forgotten. He declared Mr. Hall's suggestion to be a sound idea.

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[1] Charles Hopkins Clark, managing editor of the Hartford *Courant*.

Beecher agreed that there were many reasons why a monument should be erected to Adam, and suggested that a subscription be started for the purpose. Certain business men, seeing an opportunity for advertising the city, took the matter semi-seriously, and offered to contribute large sums in the interest of the enterprise. Then it was agreed that Congress should be petitioned to sanction the idea exclusively to Elmira, prohibiting the erection of any such memorial elsewhere. A document to this effect was prepared, headed by F. G. Hall, and signed by other leading citizens of Elmira, including Beecher himself. General Joe Hawley came along just then on a political speech-making tour. Clemens introduced him, and Hawley, in turn, agreed to father the petition in Congress. What had begun merely as pleasantry began to have a formidable look.

But alas! in the end Hawley's courage had failed him. He began to hate his undertaking. He was afraid of the national laugh it would arouse, the jeers of the newspapers. It was certain to leak out that Mark Twain was behind it, in spite of the fact that his name nowhere appeared; that it was one of his colossal jokes. Now and then, in the privacy of his own room at night, Hawley would hunt up the Adam petition and read it and feel the cold sweat breaking out. He postponed the matter from one session to another till the summer of 1881, when he was about to sail for Europe. Then he gave the document to his wife, to turn over to Clemens, and ignominiously fled.[1]

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[1] For text of the petition in full, etc., see Appendix P, at the end of last volume.

Mark Twain's introduction of Hawley at Elmira contained this pleasantry:

"General Hawley was president of the Centennial Commission. Was a gallant soldier in the war. He has been Governor of Connecticut, member of Congress, and was president of the convention that nominated Abraham Lincoln."

General Hawley: "That nominated Grant."

Twain: "He says it was Grant, but I know better. He is a member of my church at Hartford, and the author of 'Beautiful Snow.' Maybe he will deny that. But I am only here to give him a character from his last place. As a pure citizen, I respect him; as a personal friend of years, I have the warmest regard for him; as a neighbor whose vegetable garden joins mine, why—why, I watch him. That's nothing; we all do that with any neighbor. General Hawley keeps his promises, not only in private, but in public. He is an editor who believes what he writes in his own paper. As the author of 'Beautiful Snow' he added a new pang to winter. He is broad-souled, generous, noble, liberal, alive to his moral and religious responsibilities. Whenever the contribution-box was passed I never knew him to take out a cent."

CXXXV

A TRIP WITH SHERMAN AND AN INTERVIEW WITH GRANT

THE Army of the Potomac gave a dinner in Hartford on the 8th of June, 1881. But little memory remains of it now beyond Mark Twain's speech and a bill of fare containing original comments, ascribed to various revered authors, such as Johnson, Milton, and Carlyle. A pleasant incident followed, however, which Clemens himself used to relate. General Sherman attended the banquet, and Secretary of War, Robert Lincoln. Next morning Clemens and Twichell were leaving for West Point, where they were to address the military students, guests on the same special train on which Lincoln and Sherman had their private car. This car was at the end of the train, and when the two passengers reached the station, Sherman and Lincoln were out on the rear platform addressing the multitude. Clemens and Twichell went in and, taking seats, waited for them.

As the speakers finished the train started, but they still remained outside, bowing and waving to the assembled citizens, so that it was under good headway before they came in. Sherman came up to Clemens, who sat smoking unconcernedly.

"Well," he said, "who told you you could go in this car?"

"Nobody," said Clemens.

"Do you expect to pay extra fare?" asked Sherman.

"No," said Clemens. "I don't expect to pay *any* fare."

"Oh, you don't. Then you'll work your way."

Sherman took off his coat and military hat and made Clemens put them on.

"Now," said he, "whenever the train stops you go out on the platform and represent me and make a speech."

It was not long before the train stopped, and Clemens, according to orders, stepped out on the rear platform and bowed to the crowd. There was a cheer at the sight of his military uniform. Then the cheer waned, became a murmur of uncertainty, followed by an undertone of discussion. Presently somebody said:

"Say, that ain't Sherman, that's Mark Twain," which brought another cheer.

Then Sherman had to come out too, and the result was that both spoke. They kept this up at the different stations, and sometimes Lincoln came out with them. When there was time all three spoke, much to the satisfaction of their audiences.

President Garfield was shot that summer—July 2, 1881.[1] He died September 19th, and Arthur came into power. There was a great feeling of uncertainty as to what he would do. He was regarded as "an excellent gentleman with a weakness for his friends." Incumbents holding appointive offices were in a state of dread.

Howells's father was consul at Toronto, and, believing his place to be in danger, he appealed to his son. In his book Howells tells how, in turn, he appealed to Clemens, remembering his friendship with Grant and Grant's friendship with Arthur. He asked Clemens to write to Grant, but Clemens would hear of nothing less than a call on the General, during which the matter would be presented to him in person. Howells relates how the three of them lunched together, in a little room just out of the office, on baked beans and coffee, brought in from some near-by restaurant:

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[1] On the day that President Garfield was shot Mrs. Clemens received from their friend Reginald Cholmondeley a letter of condolence on the death of her husband in Australia; startling enough, though in reality rather comforting than otherwise, for the reason that the "Mark Twain" who had died in Australia was a very persistent impostor. Clemens wrote Cholmondeley: "Being dead I might be excused from writing letters, but I am not that kind of a corpse. May I never be so dead as to neglect the hail of a friend from a far land." Out of this incident grew a feature of an anecdote related in *Following the Equator* the joke played by the man from Bendigo.

> The baked beans and coffee were of about the railroad-refreshment quality; but eating them with Grant was like sitting down to baked beans and coffee with Julius Cæsar, or Alexander, or some other great Plutarchan captain.

Clemens, also recalling the interview, once added some interesting details:

"I asked Grant if he wouldn't write a word on a card which Howells could carry to Washington and hand to the President. But, as usual, General Grant was his natural self—that is to say, ready and determined to do a great deal more for you than you could possibly ask him to do. He said he was going to Washington in a couple of days to dine with the President, and he would speak to him himself on the subject and make it a personal matter. Grant was in the humor to talk—he was always in a humor to talk when no strangers were present—he forced us to stay and take luncheon in a private room, and continued to talk all the time. It was baked beans, but how 'he sits and towers,' Howells said, quoting Dante. Grant remembered 'Squibob' Derby (John Phœnix) at West Point very well. He said that Derby was always drawing caricatures of the professors and playing jokes on everybody. He told a thing which I had heard before but had never seen in print. A professor questioning a class concerning certain particulars of a possible siege said, 'Suppose a thousand men are besieging a fortress whose equipment of provisions is so-and-so; it is a military axiom that at the end of forty-five days the fort will surrender. Now, young men, if any of you were in command of such a fortress, how would you proceed?'

"Derby held up his hand in token that he had an answer for that question. He said, 'I would march out, let the enemy in, and at the end of forty-five days I would change places with him.'

"I tried hard, during that interview, to get General Grant to agree to write his personal memoirs for publication, but he wouldn't listen to the suggestion. His inborn diffidence made him shrink from voluntarily coming before the public and placing himself under criticism as an author. He had no confidence in his ability to write well; whereas we all know now that he possessed an admirable literary gift and style. He was also sure that the book would have no sale, and of course that would be a humility too. I argued that the book would have an enormous sale, and that out of my experience I could save him from making unwise contracts with publishers, and would have the contract arranged in such a way that they could not swindle him, but he said he had no necessity for any addition to his income. Of course he could not foresee that he was camping on a volcano; that as Ward's partner he was a ruined man even then, and of course I had no suspicion that in four years from that time I would become his publisher. He would not agree to write his memoirs. He only said that some day he would make very full notes and leave them behind him, and then if his children chose to make them into a book they could do so. We came away then. He fulfilled his promise entirely concerning Howells's father, who held his office until he resigned of his own accord."

CXXXVI

"THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER"

DURING the summer absence alterations were made in the Hartford home, with extensive decorations by Tiffany. The work was not completed when the family returned. Clemens wrote to Charles Warren Stoddard, then in the Sandwich Islands, that the place was full of carpenters and decorators, whereas what they really needed was "an incendiary."

> If the house would only burn down we would pack up the cubs and fly to the isles of the blest, and shut ourselves up in the healing solitudes of the crater of Haleakala and get a good rest, for the mails do not intrude there, nor yet the telephone and the telegraph; and after resting we would come down the mountain a piece and board with a godly, breech-clouted native, and eat poi and dirt, and give thanks to whom all thanks belong for these privileges, and never housekeep any more.

They had acquired more ground. One morning in the spring Mark Twain had looked out of his window just in time to see a man lift an ax to cut down a tree on the lot which lay between his own and that of his neighbor. He had heard that a house was to be built there; altogether too close to him for comfort and privacy. Leaning out of the window he called sonorously, "Woodman, spare that tree!" Then he hurried down, obtained a stay of proceedings, and without delay purchased the lot from the next-door neighbor who owned it, acquiring thereby one hundred feet of extra ground and a greenhouse which occupied it. It was a costly purchase; the owner knew he could demand his own price; he asked and received twelve thousand dollars for the strip.

In November, Clemens found that he must make another trip to Canada. *The Prince and the Pauper* was ready for issue, and to insure Canadian copyright the author must cross the line in person. He did not enjoy the prospect of a cold-weather trip to the north, and tried to tempt Howells to go with him, but only succeeded in persuading Osgood, who would do anything or go anywhere that offered the opportunity for pleasant company and junket.

It was by no means an unhappy fortnight. Clemens took a note-book, and there are plenty of items that give reality to that long-ago excursion. He found the Canadian girls so pretty that he records it as a relief now and then to see a plain one. On another page he tells how one night in the hotel a mouse gnawed and kept him awake, and how he got up and hunted for it, hoping to destroy it. He made a rebus picture for the children of this incident in a letter home.

We get a glimpse just here of how he was constantly viewing himself as literary material—human material—an example from which some literary aspect or lesson may be drawn. Following the mouse adventure we find it thus dramatized:

> Trace Father Brebeuf all through this trip, and when I am in a rage and can't endure the mouse be reading of Brebeuf's marvelous endurances and be shamed.
>
> And finally, after chasing the bright-eyed rascal several days, and throwing things and trying to jump on him when in my overshoes, he darts away with those same bright eyes, then straightway I read Brebeuf's magnificent martyrdom, and turn in, subdued and wondering. By and by the thought occurs to me, Brebeuf, with his good, great heart would spare even that poor humble mousie—and for his sake so will I—I will throw

the trap in the fire—jump out of bed, reach under, fetch out the trap, and find him throttled there and not two minutes dead.

They gave him a dinner in Montreal. Louis Frechette, the Canadian poet, was there and Clemens addressed him handsomely in the response he made to the speech of welcome. From that moment Frechette never ceased to adore Mark Twain, and visited him soon after the return to Hartford.

The Prince and the Pauper was published in England, Canada, Germany, and America early in December, 1881. There had been no stint of money, and it was an extremely handsome book. The pen-and-ink drawings were really charming, and they were lavish as to number. It was an attractive volume from every standpoint, and it was properly dedicated "To those good-mannered and agreeable children, Susy and Clara Clemens."

The story itself was totally unlike anything that Mark Twain had done before. Enough of its plan and purpose has been given in former chapters to make a synopsis of it unnecessary here. The story of the wandering prince and the pauper king—an impressive picture of ancient legal and regal cruelty—is as fine and consistent a tale as exists in the realm of pure romance. Unlike its great successor, the *Yankee at King Arthur's Court*, it never sacrifices the illusion to the burlesque, while through it all there runs a delicate vein of humor. Only here and there is there the slightest disillusion, and this mainly in the use of some ultra-modern phrase or word.

Mark Twain never did any better writing than some of the splendid scenes in *The Prince and the Pauper*. The picture of Old London Bridge; the scene in the vagabond's retreat, with its presentation to the little king of the wrongs inflicted by the laws of his realm; the episode of the jail where his revelation reaches a climax—these are but a few of the splendid pictures which the chapters portray, while the spectacle of England acquiring mercy at the hands of two children, a king and a beggar, is one which only genius could create. One might quote here, but to do so without the context would be to sacrifice atmosphere, half the story's charm. How breathlessly interesting is the tale of it! We may imagine that first little audience at Mark Twain's fireside hanging expectant on every paragraph, hungry always for more. Of all Mark Twain's longer works of fiction it is perhaps the most coherent as to plot, the most carefully thought out, the most perfect as to workmanship. This is not to say that it is his greatest story. Probably time will not give it that rank, but it comes near to being a perfectly constructed story, and it has an imperishable charm.

It was well received, though not always understood by the public. The reviewer was so accustomed to looking for the joke in Mark Twain's work, that he found it hard to estimate this new product. Some even went so far as to refer to it as one of Mark Twain's big jokes, meaning probably that he had created a chapter in English history with no foundation beyond his fancy. Of course these things pained the author of the book. At one time, he had been inclined to publish it anonymously, to avert this sort of misunderstanding, and sometimes now he regretted not having done so.

Yet there were many gratifying notices. The New York *Herald* reviewer gave the new book two columns of finely intelligent appreciation. In part he said:

> To those who have followed the career of Mark Twain, his appearance as the author of a charming and noble romance is really no more of a surprise than to see a stately structure risen upon sightly ground owned by an architect of genius, with the resources of abundant building material and ample training at command. Of his capacity they have had no doubt, and they rejoice in his taking a step which they felt he was able to take. Through all his publications may be traced the marks of the path

which has led up to this happy height. His humor has often been the cloak, but not the mask, of a sturdy purpose. His work has been characterized by a manly love of truth, a hatred of humbug, and a scorn for cant. A genial warmth and whole-souledness, a beautiful fancy, a fertile imagination, and a native feeling for the picturesque and a fine eye for color have afforded the basis of a style which has become more and more plastic and finished.

And in closing:

The characters of these two boys, twins in spirit, will rank with the purest and loveliest creations of child-life in the realm of fiction.

CXXXVII

CERTAIN ATTACKS AND REPRISALS

BEYOND the publication of *The Prince and the Pauper* Clemens was sparingly represented in print in '81. A chapter originally intended for the book, the "Whipping Boy's Story," he gave to the *Bazaar Budget*, a little special-edition sheet printed in Hartford. It was the story of the Bull and the Bees which he later adapted for use in *Joan of Arc*, the episode in which Joan's father rides a bull to a funeral. Howells found that it interfered with the action in the story of the *Prince*, and we might have spared it from the story of *Joan*, though hardly without regret.

The military story "A Curious Episode" was published in the *Century Magazine* for November. The fact that Clemens had heard, and not invented, the story was set forth quite definitely and fully in his opening paragraphs. Nevertheless, a "Captious Reader" thought it necessary to write to a New York publication concerning its origin:

> I am an admirer of the writings of Mr. Mark Twain, and consequently, when I saw the table of contents of the November number of the *Century*, I bought it and turned at once to the article bearing his name, and entitled, "A Curious Episode." When I began to read it, it struck me as strangely familiar, and I soon recognized the story as a true one, told me in the summer of 1878 by an officer of the United States artillery. Query: Did Mr. Twain expect the public to credit this narrative to his clever brain?

The editor, seeing a chance for Mark Twain "copy," forwarded a clipping to Clemens and asked him if he had anything to say in the matter. Clemens happened to know the editor very well, and he did have something to say, not for print, but for the editor's private ear.

> The newspaper custom of shooting a man in the back and then calling upon him to come out in a card and prove that he was not engaged in any infamy at the time is a good enough custom for those who think it justifiable. Your correspondent is not stupid, I judge, but purely and simply malicious. He knew there was not the shadow of a suggestion, from the beginning to the end of "A Curious Episode," that the story was an *invention;* he knew he had no warrant for trying to persuade the public that I had stolen the narrative and was endeavoring to palm it off as a piece of literary invention; he also knew that he was asking his closing question with a base motive, else he would have asked it of me by letter, not spread it before the public.
>
> I have never wronged you in any way, and I think you had no right to print that communication; no right, neither any excuse. As to publicly answering that correspondent, I would as soon think of bandying words in public with any *other* prostitute.

The editor replied in a manly, frank acknowledgment of error. He had not looked up the article itself in the *Century* before printing the communication.

"Your letter has taught me a lesson," he said. "The blame belongs to me for not hunting up the proofs. Please accept my apology."

Mark Twain was likely to be peculiarly sensitive to printed innuendos. Not always. Sometimes he would only laugh at them or be wholly indifferent. Indeed, in his later years, he seldom cared to read anything about himself, one way or the other, but at the time of which we are now writing—the period of the early eighties—he was alive to any comment of the press. His strong sense of humor, and still stronger sense of human weakness, caused him to overlook many things which another might regard as an affront; but if the thing printed were merely an uncalled-for slur, an inexcusable imputation, he was inclined to rage and plan violence. Sometimes he conceived retribution in the form of libel suits with heavy damages. Sometimes he wrote blasting answers, which Mrs. Clemens would not let him print.

At one time he planned a biography of a certain editor who seemed to be making a deliberate personal campaign against his happiness. Clemens had heard that offending items were being printed in this man's paper; friends, reporting with customary exaggeration, declared that these sneers and brutalities appeared almost daily, so often as to cause general remark.

This was enough. He promptly began to collect data—damaging data—relating to that editor's past history. He even set a man to work in England collecting information concerning his victim. One of his notebooks contains the memoranda; a few items will show how terrific was to be the onslaught.

> When the naturalist finds a new kind of animal, he writes him up in the interest of science. No matter if it is an unpleasant animal. This is a new kind of animal, and in the cause of society must be written up. He is the polecat of our species. . . . He is purely and simply a Guiteau with the courage left out. . . .
>
> Steel portraits of him as a sort of idiot, from infancy up—a dozen scattered through the book—all should resemble him.

But never mind the rest. When he had got thoroughly interested in his project Mrs. Clemens, who had allowed the cyclone to wear itself out a little with its own vehemence, suggested that perhaps it would be well to have some one make an examination of the files of the paper and see just what had been said of him. So he subscribed for the paper himself and set a man to work on the back numbers. We will let him tell the conclusion of the matter himself, in his report of it to Howells:

> The result arrived from my New York man this morning. Oh, what a pitiable wreck of high hopes! The "almost daily" assaults for two months consist of (1) adverse criticism of P. & P. from an enraged idiot in the London *Athenæum*, (2) paragraphs from some indignant Englishman in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, who pays me the vast compliment of gravely rebuking some imaginary ass who has set me up in the neighborhood of Rabelais, (3) a remark about the Montreal dinner, touched with an almost invisible satire, and, (4) a remark about refusal of Canadian copyright, not complimentary, but not necessarily malicious; and of course adverse criticism which is not malicious is a thing which none but fools irritate themselves about.
>
> There, that is the prodigious bugaboo in its entirety! Can you conceive of a man's getting himself into a sweat over so diminutive a provocation? I am sure I can't. What the devil can those friends of mine have been thinking about to spread those three or four harmless things out into two months of daily sneers and affronts?
>
> Boiled down, this vast outpouring of malice amounts to simply this: *one* jest (one can make nothing more serious than that out of it). One jest, and that is all; for foreign criticisms do not count, they being matters of news, and proper for publication in anybody's newspaper. . . .
>
> Well, my mountain has brought forth its mouse, and a sufficiently small mouse it is, God knows. And my three weeks' hard work has got to go into the ignominious pigeonhole. Confound it, I could have earned ten thousand dollars with infinitely less trouble.

Howells refers to this episode, and concludes:

> So the paper was acquitted and the editor's life was spared. The wretch never, never knew how near he was to losing it, with incredible preliminaries of obloquy, and a subsequent devotion to lasting infamy.

CXXXVIII

MANY UNDERTAKINGS

TO write a detailed biography of Mark Twain at this period would be to defy perusal. Even to set down all the interesting matters, interesting to the public of his time, would mean not only to exhaust the subject, but the reader. He lived at the top of his bent, and almost anything relating to him was regarded as news. Daily and hourly he mingled with important matters or spoke concerning them. A bare list of the interesting events of Mark Twain's life would fill a large volume.

He was so busy, so deeply interested himself, so vitally alive to every human aspect. He read the papers through, and there was always enough to arouse his indignation—the doings of the human race at large could be relied upon to do that—and he would write, and write, to relieve himself. His mental Niagara was always pouring away, turning out articles, essays, communications on every conceivable subject, mainly with the idea of reform. There were many public and private abuses, and he wanted to correct them all. He covered reams of paper with lurid heresies—political, religious, civic—for most of which there was no hope of publication.

Now and then he was allowed to speak out: An order from the Post-office Department at Washington concerning the superscription of envelopes seemed to him unwarranted. He assailed it, and directly the nation was being entertained by a controversy between Mark Twain and the Postmaster-General's private secretary, who subsequently receded from the field.

At another time, on the matter of postage rates he wrote a paper which began: "Reader, suppose you were an idiot. And suppose you were a member of Congress. But I repeat myself."

It is hardly necessary to add that the paper did not appear.

On the whole, Clemens wrote his strictures more for relief than to print, and such of these papers as are preserved to-day form a curious collection of human documents. Many of them could be printed to-day, without distress to any one. The conditions that invited them are changed; the heresies are not heresies any more. He may have had some thought of their publication in later years, for once he wrote:

> Sometimes my feelings are so hot that I have to take the pen and put them out on paper to keep them from setting me afire inside; then all that ink and labor are wasted because I can't print the result. I have just finished an article of this kind, and it satisfies me entirely. It does my weather-beaten soul good to read it, and admire the trouble it would make for me and the family. I will leave it behind and utter it from the grave. There is a free speech there, and no harm to the family.

It is too late and too soon to print most of these things; too late to print them for their salutary influence, too soon to print them as literature.

He was interested in everything: in music, as little as he knew of it. He had an ear for melody, a dramatic vision, and the poetic conception of sound. Reading some lilting lyric, he could fancy the words marching to melody, and would cast about among his friends for some one who could supply a tuneful setting. Once he wrote to his friend the Rev. Dr. Parker, who was a skilled musician, urging him to write a score for Tennyson's

"Bugle Song," outlining an attractive scheme for it which the order of his fancy had formulated. Dr. Parker replied that the "Bugle Song," often attempted, had been the despair of many musicians.

He was interested in business affairs. Already, before the European trip, he had embarked in, and disembarked from, a number of pecuniary ventures. He had not been satisfied with a strictly literary income. The old tendency to speculative investment, acquired during those restless mining days, always possessed him. There were no silver mines in the East, no holes in the ground into which to empty money and effort; but there were plenty of equivalents—inventions, stock companies, and the like. He had begun by putting five thousand dollars into the American Publishing Company; but that was a sound and profitable venture, and deserves to be remembered for that reason.

Then a man came along with a patent steam generator which would save ninety per cent. of the fuel energy, or some such amount, and Mark Twain was early persuaded that it would revolutionize the steam manufactures of the world; so he put in whatever bank surplus he had and bade it a permanent good-by.

Following the steam generator came a steam pulley, a rather small contrivance, but it succeeded in extracting thirty-two thousand dollars from his bank account in a period of sixteen months.

By the time he had accumulated a fresh balance, a new method of marine telegraphy was shown him, so he used it up on that, twenty-five thousand dollars being the price of this adventure.

A watch company in western New York was ready to sell him a block of shares by the time he was prepared to experiment again, but it did not quite live to declare the first dividend on his investment.

Senator John P. Jones invited him to join in the organization of an accident insurance company, and such was Jones's confidence in the venture that he guaranteed Clemens against loss. Mark Twain's only profit from this source was in the delivery of a delicious speech, which he made at a dinner given to Cornelius Walford, of London, an insurance author of repute. Jones was paying back the money presently, and about that time came a young inventor named Graham Bell, offering stock in a contrivance for carrying the human voice on an electric wire. At almost any other time Clemens would eagerly have welcomed this opportunity; but he was so gratified at having got his money out of the insurance venture that he refused to respond to the happy "hello" call of fortune. In some memoranda made thirty years later he said:

> I declined. I said I didn't want anything more to do with wildcat speculation. Then he [Bell] offered the stock to me at twenty-five. I said I didn't want it at any price. He became eager; insisted that I take five hundred dollars' worth. He said he would sell me as much as I wanted for five hundred dollars; offered to let me gather it up in my hands and measure it in a plug hat; said I could have a whole hatful for five hundred dollars. But I was the burnt child, and I resisted all these temptations—resisted them easily; went off with my check intact, and next day lent five thousand of it, on an unindorsed note, to a friend who was going to go bankrupt three days later.
>
> About the end of the year I put up a telephone wire from my house down to the *Courant* office, the only telephone wire in town, and the *first* one that was ever used in a private house in the world.

That had been only a little while before he sailed for Europe. When he returned he would have been willing to accept a very trifling interest in the telephone industry for the amount of his insurance salvage.

He had a fresh interest in patents now, and when his old friend Dan Slote got hold of a new process for engraving—the kaolatype or "chalk-plate" process—which was going to revolutionize the world of illustration, he promptly acquired a third interest, and eventually was satisfied with nothing short of control. It was an ingenious process: a sheet of perfectly smooth steel was coated with a preparation of kaolin (or china clay), and a picture was engraved *through* the coating down to the steel surface. This formed the matrix into which the molten metal was poured to make the stereotype plate, or die, for printing. It was Clemens's notion that he could utilize this process for the casting of brass dies for stamping book covers—that, so applied, the fortunes to be made out of it would be larger and more numerous. Howells tells how, at one time, Clemens thought the "damned human race" was almost to be redeemed by a process of founding brass without air-bubbles in it. This was the time referred to and the race had to go unredeemed; for, after long, worried, costly experimenting, the brass refused to accommodate its nature to the new idea, while the chalk plate itself, with all its subsidiary and auxiliary possibilities, was infringed upon right and left, and the protecting patent failed to hold. The process was doomed, in any case. It was barely established before the photographic etching processes, superior in all ways, were developed and came quickly into use. The kaolatype enterprise struggled nobly for a considerable period. Clemens brought his niece's husband, young Charles L. Webster, from Fredonia to manage it for him, and backed it liberally. Webster was vigorous, hard-working, and capable; but the end of each month showed a deficit, until Clemens was from forty to fifty thousand dollars out of pocket in his effort to save the race with chalk and brass. The history of these several ventures (and there were others), dismissed here in a few paragraphs, would alone make a volume not without interest, certainly not without humor. Following came the type-setting machine, but we are not ready for that. Of necessity it is a longer, costlier story.

Mrs. Clemens did not share his enthusiasm in these various enterprises. She did not oppose them, at least not strenuously, but she did not encourage them. She did not see their need. Their home was beautiful; they were happy; he could do his work in deliberation and comfort. She knew the value of money better than he, cared more for it in her own way; but she had not his desire to heap up vast and sudden sums, to revel in torrential golden showers. She was willing to let well enough alone. Clemens could not do this, and suffered accordingly. In the midst of fair home surroundings and honors we find him writing to his mother:

> Life has come to be a very serious matter with me. I have a badgered, harassed feeling a good part of my time. It comes mainly from business responsibilities and annoyances.

He had no moral right to be connected with business at all. He had a large perception of business opportunity, but no vision of its requirements—its difficulties and details. He was the soul of honor, but in anything resembling practical direction he was but a child. During any period of business venture he was likely to be in hot water: eagerly excited, worried, impatient, alternately suspicious and overtrusting, rash, frenzied, and altogether upset.

Yet never, even to the end of his days, would he permanently lose faith in speculative ventures. Human traits are sometimes modified, but never eliminated. The man who is born to be a victim of misplaced confidence will continue to be one so long as he lives and there are men willing to victimize him. The man who believes in himself as an investor will uphold that faith against all disaster so long as he draws breath and has money to back his judgments.

CHARLES L. WEBSTER

CXXXIX

FINANCIAL AND LITERARY

BY a statement made on the 1st of January, 1882, of Mark Twain's disbursements for the preceding year, it is shown that considerably more than one hundred thousand dollars had been expended during that twelve months. It is a large sum for an author to pay out in one year. It would cramp most authors to do it, and it was not the best financing, even for Mark Twain. It required all that the books could earn, all the income from the various securities, and a fair sum from their principal.

There is a good deal of biography in the statement. Of the amount expended forty-six thousand dollars represented investments; but of this comfortable sum less than five thousand dollars would cover the legitimate purchases; the rest had gone in the "ventures" from whose bourne no dollar would ever return. Also, a large sum had been spent for the additional land and for improvements on the home—somewhat more than thirty thousand dollars altogether—while the home life had become more lavish, the establishment had grown each year to a larger scale, the guests and entertainments had become more and more numerous, until the actual household expenditure required about as much as the books and securities could earn.

It was with the increased scale of living that Clemens had become especially eager for some source of commercial profit; something that would yield a return, not in paltry thousands, but hundreds of thousands. Like Colonel Sellers, he must have something with "millions in it." Almost any proposition that seemed to offer these possible millions appealed to him, and in his imagination he saw the golden freshet pouring in.

His natural taste was for a simple, inexpensive life; yet in his large hospitality, and in a certain boyish love of grandeur, he gloried in the splendor of his entertainment, the admiration and delight of his guests. There were *always* guests; they were coming and going constantly. Clemens used to say that he proposed to establish a 'bus line between their house and the station for the accommodation of his company. He had the Southern hospitality. Much company appealed to a very large element in his strangely compounded nature. For the better portion of the year he was willing to pay the price of it, whether in money or in endurance, and Mrs. Clemens heroically did her part. She loved these things also, in her own way. She took pride in them, and realized that they were a part of his vast success. Yet in her heart she often longed for the simpler life—above all, for the farm life at Elmira. Her spirit cried out for the rest and comfort there. In one of her letters she says:

> The house has been full of company, and I have been "whirled around." How can a body help it? Oh, I cannot help sighing for the peace and quiet of the farm. This is my work, and I know that I do very wrong when I feel chafed by it, but how can I be right about it? Sometimes it seems as if the simple sight of people would drive me *mad*. I am all wrong; if I would simply accept the fact that this is my work and let other things go, I know I should not be so fretted; but I want so much to do other things, to study and do things with the children, and I cannot.
>
> I have the best French teacher that I ever had, and if I could give any time to it I could not help learning French.

When we reflect on the conditions, we are inclined to say how much better it would have been to have remained there among the hills in that quiet, inexpensive environment, to have let the world go. But that was not possible. The game was of far larger proportions than any that could be restricted to the limits of retirement and the simpler round of life. Mark Twain's realm had become too large for his court to be established in a cottage.

It is hard to understand that in spite of a towering fame Mark Twain was still not regarded by certain American arbiters of reputations as a literary fixture; his work was not yet recognized by them as being of important meaning and serious purport.

In Boston, at that time still the Athens of America, he was enjoyed, delighted in; but he was not honored as being quite one of the elect. Howells tells us that:

> In proportion as people thought themselves refined they questioned that quality which all recognize in him now, but which was then the inspired knowledge of the simple-hearted multitude.

Even at the *Atlantic* dinners his place was "below the salt"—a place of honor, but not of the greatest honor. He did not sit on the dais with Emerson, Longfellow, Holmes, Whittier, Howells, and Aldrich. We of a later period, who remember him always as the center of every board—the one supreme figure, his splendid head and crown of silver hair the target of every eye—find it hard to realize the Cambridge conservatism that clad him figuratively always in motley, and seated him lower than the throne itself.

Howells clearly resented this condition, and from random review corners had ventured heresy. Now in 1882 he seems to have determined to declare himself, in a large, free way, concerning his own personal estimate of Mark Twain. He prepared for the *Century Magazine* a biographical appreciation, in which he served notice to the world that Mark Twain's work, considered even as literature, was of very considerable importance indeed. Whether or not Howells then realized the "inspired knowledge of the multitude," and that most of the nation outside of the counties of Suffolk and Essex already recognized his claim, is not material. Very likely he did; but he also realized the mental dusk of the cultured *un*inspired and his prerogative to enlighten them. His *Century* article was a kind of manifesto, a declaration of independence, no longer confined to the obscurities of certain book notices, where of course one might be expected to stretch friendly favor a little for a popular *Atlantic* contributor. In the open field of the *Century Magazine* Howells ventured to declare:

> Mark Twain's humor is as simple in form and as direct as the statesmanship of Lincoln or the generalship of Grant.
>
> When I think how purely and wholly American it is I am a little puzzled at its universal acceptance. . . . Why, in fine, should an English chief-justice keep Mark Twain's books always at hand? Why should Darwin have gone to them for rest and refreshment at midnight, when spent with scientific research?
>
> I suppose that Mark Twain transcends all other American humorists in the universal qualities. He deals very little with the pathetic, which he nevertheless knows very well how to manage, as he has shown, notably in the true story of the old slave-mother; but there is a poetic lift in his work, even when he permits you to recognize it only as something satirized. There is always the touch of nature, the presence of a sincere and frank manliness in what he says, the companionship of a spirit which is at once delightfully open and deliciously shrewd. Elsewhere I have tried to persuade the reader that his humor is, at its best, the foamy break of the strong tide of earnestness in him. But it would be limiting him unjustly to describe him as a satirist, and it is hardly practicable to establish him in people's minds as a moralist; he has made them laugh too long; they will not believe him serious; they think some joke is always intended. This is the penalty, as Dr. Holmes has pointed out, of mak-

ing one's first success as a humorist. There was a paper of Mark Twain's printed in the *Atlantic Monthly* some years ago and called, "The Facts Concerning the Late Carnival of Crime in Connecticut," which ought to have won popular recognition of the ethical intelligence underlying his humor. It was, of course, funny; but under the fun it was an impassioned study of the human conscience. Hawthorne or Bunyan might have been proud to imagine that powerful allegory, which had a grotesque force far beyond either of them. . . . Yet it quite failed of the response I had hoped for it, and I shall not insist here upon Mark Twain as a moralist; though I warn the reader that if he leaves out of the account an indignant sense of right and wrong, a scorn of all affectations and pretense, an ardent hate of meanness and injustice, he will come infinitely short of knowing Mark Twain.

Howells realized the unwisdom and weakness of dogmatic insistence, and the strength of understatement. To him Mark Twain was already the moralist, the philosopher, and the statesman; he was willing that the reader should take his time to realize these things. The article, with his subject's portrait as a frontispiece, appeared in the *Century* for September, 1882. If it carried no new message to many of its readers, it at least set the stamp of official approval upon what they had already established in their hearts.

CXL

DOWN THE RIVER

OSGOOD was doing no great things with *The Prince and the Pauper*, but Clemens gave him another book presently, a collection of sketches—*The Stolen White Elephant*. It was not an especially important volume, though some of the features, such as "Mrs. McWilliams and the Lightning" and the "Carnival of Crime," are among the best of their sort, while the "Elephant" story is an amazingly good take-off on what might be called the spectacular detective. The interview between Inspector Blunt and the owner of the elephant is typical. The inspector asks:

"Now what does this elephant eat, and how much?"

"Well, as to what he eats—he will eat anything. He will eat a man, he will eat a Bible; he will eat anything between a man and a Bible."

"Good—very good, indeed, but too general. Details are necessary; details are the only valuable thing in our trade. Very well, as to men. At one meal—or, if you prefer, during one day—how many men will he eat if fresh?"

"He would not care whether they were fresh or not; at a single meal he would eat five ordinary men."

"Very good; five men. We will put that down. What nationalities would he prefer?"

"He is indifferent about nationalities. He prefers acquaintances, but is not prejudiced against strangers."

"Very good. Now, as to Bibles. How many Bibles would he eat at a meal?"

"He would eat an entire edition."

Clemens and Osgood had a more important publishing enterprise on hand. The long-deferred completion of the Mississippi book was to be accomplished; the long-deferred trip down the river was to be taken. Howells was going abroad, but the charming Osgood was willing to make the excursion, and a young man named Roswell Phelps, of Hartford, was engaged as a stenographer to take the notes.

Clemens made a farewell trip to Boston to see Howells before his departure, and together they went to Concord to call on Emerson; a fortunate thing, for he lived but a few weeks longer. They went again in the evening, not to see him, but to stand reverently outside and look at his house. This was in April. Longfellow had died in March. The fact that Howells was going away indefinitely, made them reminiscent and sad.

Just what breach Clemens committed during this visit is not remembered now, and it does not matter; but his letter to Howells, after his return to Hartford, makes it pretty clear that it was memorable enough at the time. Half-way in it he breaks out:

> But oh, hell, there is no hope for a person that is built like me, because there is no cure, no cure.
>
> If I could only *know* when I have committed a crime: then I could conceal it, and not go stupidly dribbling it out, circumstance by circumstance, into the ears of a person who will give no sign till the confession is complete; and then the sudden damnation drops on a body like the released pile-driver, and he finds himself in the earth down to his chin. When he merely supposed he was being entertaining.

Next day he was off with Osgood and the stenographer for St. Louis, where they took the steamer *Gold Dust* down the river. He intended to travel under an assumed name, but was promptly recognized, both at the Southern Hotel and on the boat. In *Life on the Mississippi* he has given us the atmosphere of his trip, with his new impressions of old scenes; also his first interview with the pilot, whom he did not remember, but who easily remembered him.

"I did not write that story in the book quite as it happened," he reflected once, many years later. "We went on board at night. Next morning I was up bright and early and out on deck to see if I could recognize any of the old landmarks. I could not remember any. I did not know where we were at all. It was a new river to me entirely. I climbed up in the pilot-house and there was a fellow of about forty at the wheel. I said 'Good morning.' He answered pleasantly enough. His face was entirely strange to me. Then I sat down on the high seat back of the wheel and looked out at the river and began to ask a few questions, such as a landsman would ask. He began, in the old way, to fill me up with the old lies, and I enjoyed letting him do it. Then suddenly he turned round to me and said:

"'I want to get a cup of coffee. You hold her, will you, till I come back?' And before I could say a word he was out of the pilot-house door and down the steps. It all came so suddenly that I sprang to the wheel, of course, as I would have done twenty years before. Then in a moment I realized my position. Here I was with a great big steamboat in the middle of the Mississippi River, without any further knowledge than that fact, and the pilot out of sight. I settled my mind on three conclusions: first, that the pilot might be a lunatic; second, that he had recognized me and thought I knew the river; third, that we were in a perfectly safe place, where I could not possibly kill the steamboat. But that last conclusion, though the most comforting, was an extremely doubtful one. I knew perfectly well that no sane pilot would trust his steamboat for a single moment in the hands of a greenhorn unless he were standing by the greenhorn's side. Of course, by force of habit, when I grabbed the wheel, I had taken the steering marks ahead and astern, and I made up my mind to hold her on those marks to the hair; but I could feel myself getting old and gray. Then all at once I recognized where we were; we were in what is called the Grand Chain—a succession of hidden rocks, one of the most dangerous places on the river. There were two rocks there only about seventy feet apart, and you've got to go exactly between them or wreck the boat. There was a time when I could have done it without a tremor, but that time wasn't now. I would have given any reasonable sum to have been on the shore just at that moment. I think I was about ready to drop dead when I heard a step on the pilot-house stair; then the door opened and the pilot came in, quietly picking his teeth, and took the wheel, and I crawled weakly back to the seat. He said:

"'You thought you were playing a nice joke on me, didn't you? You thought I didn't know who you were. Why, I recognized that drawl of yours as soon as you opened your mouth.'

"I said, 'Who the h—l are you? I don't remember you.'

"'Well,' he said, 'perhaps you don't, but I was a cub pilot on the river before the war, when you were a licensed pilot, and I couldn't get a license when I was qualified for one, because the Pilots' Association was so strong at that time that they could keep new pilots out if they wanted to, and the law was that I had to be examined by two licensed pilots, and for a good while I could not get any one to make that examination. But one day you and another pilot offered to do it, and you put me through a good, healthy examination and indorsed my application for a license. I had never seen you before, and I have never seen you since until now, but I recognized you.'

"'All right,' I said. 'But if I had gone half a mile farther with that steamboat we might have all been at the bottom of the river.'

"We got to be good friends, of course, and I spent most of my time up there with him. When we got down below Cairo, and there was a big, full river—for it was high-water season and there was no danger of the boat hitting anything so long as she kept in the river—I had her most of the time on his watch. He would lie down and sleep, and leave me there to dream that the years had not slipped away; that there had been no war, no mining days, no literary adventures; that I was still a pilot, happy and care-free as I had been twenty years before."

From the book we gather that he could not keep out of the pilot-house. He was likely to get up at any hour of the night to stand his watch, and truly enough the years had slipped away. He was the young fellow in his twenties again, speculating on the problems of existence and reading his fortune in the stars. To heighten the illusion, he had himself called regularly with the four-o'clock watch, in order not to miss the mornings.[1]

The majesty and solitude of the river impressed him more than ever before, especially its solitude. It had been so full of life in his time; now it had returned once more to its primal loneliness—the loneliness of God.

At one place two steamboats were in sight at once—an unusual spectacle. Once, in the mouth of a river, he noticed a small boat, which he made out to be the *Mark Twain*. There had been varied changes in twenty-one years; only the old fascination of piloting remained unchanged. To Bixby afterward he wrote:

"I'd rather be a pilot than anything else I've ever done in my life. How do you run Plum Point?"

He met Bixby at New Orleans. Bixby was captain now on a splendid new Anchor Line steamboat, the *City of Baton Rouge*. The Anchor Line steamers were the acme of Mississippi River steamboat-building, and they were about the end of it. They were imposingly magnificent, but they were only as gorgeous clouds that marked the sunset of Mississippi steamboat travel. Mark Twain made his trip down the river just in time.

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[1] It will repay the reader to turn to chap. xxx of *Life on the Mississippi*, and consider Mark Twain's word-picture of the river sunrise.

In New Orleans he met George W. Cable and Joel Chandler Harris, and they had a fraternizing good time together, mousing about the old French Quarter or mingling with the social life of the modern city. He made a trip with Bixby in a tug to the Warmouth plantation, and they reviewed old days together, as friends parted for twenty-one years will. Altogether the New Orleans sojourn was a pleasant one, saddened only by a newspaper notice of the death, in Edinburgh, of the kindly and gentle and beloved Dr. Brown.

Clemens arranged to make the trip up the river on the *Baton Rouge*. Bixby had one pretty inefficient pilot, and stood most of the watches himself, so that with "Sam Clemens" in the pilot-house with him, it was wonderfully like those old first days of learning the river, back in the fifties.

"Sam was ever making notes in his memorandum-book, just as he always did," said Bixby to the writer, recalling the time. "I was sorry I had to stay at the wheel so much. I wanted to have more time with Sam without thinking of the river at all. Sam was sorry, too, from what he wrote after he got home."

Bixby produced a letter in the familiar handwriting. It was a tender, heart-spoken letter:

> I didn't see half enough of you. It was a sore disappointment. Osgood could have told you, if he would—discreet old dog—I expected to have you with me *all* the time. Altogether, the most pleasant part of my visit with you was after we arrived

in St. Louis, and you were your old natural self again. Twenty years have not added a month to your age or taken a fraction from your loveliness.

Said Bixby: "When we arrived in St. Louis we came to the Planters' Hotel, to this very table where you and I are sitting now, and we had a couple of hot Scotches between us, just as we have now, and we had a good last talk over old times and old acquaintances. After he returned to New York he sent for my picture. He wanted to use it in his book."

At St. Louis the travelers changed boats, and proceeded up the Mississippi toward St. Paul. Clemens laid off three days at Hannibal.

> Delightful days [he wrote home]. Loitering around all day long, examining the old localities, and talking with the gray heads who were boys and girls with me thirty or forty years ago. I spent my nights with John and Helen Garth, three miles from town, in their spacious and beautiful house. They were children with me, and afterward schoolmates. That world which I knew in its blooming youth is old and bowed and melancholy now; its soft cheeks are leathery and withered, the fire has gone out of its eyes, the spring from its step. It will be dust and ashes when I come again.

He had never seen the far upper river, and he found it very satisfying. His note-book says:

> The bluffs all along up above St. Paul are exquisitely beautiful where the rough and broken turreted rocks stand up against the sky above the steep, verdant slopes. They are inexpressibly rich and mellow in color; soft dark browns mingled with dull greens—the very tints to make an artist worship.

In a final entry he wrote:

> The romance of boating is gone now. In Hannibal the steamboat man is no longer the god.

CXLI

LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY

CLEMENS took a further step toward becoming a publisher on his own account. Not only did he contract to supply funds for the Mississippi book, but, as kaolatype, the chalk-engraving process, which had been lingeringly and expensively dying, was now become merely something to swear at, he had his niece's husband, Webster, installed as Osgood's New York subscription manager, with charge of the general agencies. There was no delay in this move. Webster must get well familiarized with the work before the Mississippi book's publication.

He had expected to have the manuscript finished pretty promptly, but the fact that he had promised it for a certain time paralyzed his effort. Even at the farm he worked without making much headway. At the end of October he wrote Howells:

> The weather turned cold, and we had to rush home, while I still lacked thirty thousand words. I had been sick and got delayed. I am going to write all day and two-thirds of the night until the thing is done or break down at it. The spur and burden of the contract are intolerable to me. I can endure the irritation of it no longer. I went to work at nine o'clock yesterday morning and went to bed an hour after midnight. Result of the day (mainly stolen from books though credit given), 9,500 words, so I reduced my burden by one-third in one day. It was five days' work in one. I have nothing more to borrow or steal; the rest must all be written. It is ten days' work. and unless something breaks it will be finished in five.

He had sworn once, when he had finally finished *A Tramp Abroad*, that he would never limit himself as to time again. But he had forgotten that vow, and was suffering accordingly.

Howells wrote from London urging him to drop everything and come over to Europe for refreshment.

> We have seen lots of nice people, and have been most pleasantly made of; but I would rather have you smoke in my face and talk for half a day, just for pleasure, than to go to the best house or club in London.

Clemens answered:

> Yes, it would be more profitable to me to do that because, with your society to help me, I should swiftly finish this now apparently interminable book. But I cannot come, because I am not boss here, and nothing but dynamite can move Mrs. Clemens away from home in the winter season.

This was in November, and he had broken all restrictions as to time. He declared that he had never had such a fight over any book before, and that he had told Osgood and everybody concerned that they must wait.

> I have said with sufficient positiveness that I will finish the book at no particular date; that I will not hurry it; that I will not hurry myself; that I will take things easy and comfortably—write when I choose to write, leave it alone when I do so prefer. . . . I have got everything at a dead standstill, and that is where it ought to be, and that is where it must remain; to follow any other policy would be to make the book worse than it already is. I ought to have finished it before showing it to anybody, and then sent it across the ocean to you to be edited, as usual; for you seem to be a great many shades happier than you deserve to be, and if I had thought of this thing earlier I would have acted upon it and taken the tuck somewhat out of your joyousness.

It was a long, heartfelt letter. Near the end of it he said:

> Cable has been here, creating worshipers on all hands. He is a marvelous talker on a deep subject. I do not see how even Spencer could unwind a thought more smoothly or orderly, and do it in cleaner, clearer, crisper English. He astounded Twichell with his faculty. You know that when it comes down to moral honesty, limpid innocence, and utterly blemishless piety, the apostles were mere policemen to Cable; so with this in mind you must imagine him at a midnight dinner in Boston the other night, where we gathered around the board of the Summerset Club: Osgood full, Boyle O'Reilly full, Fairchild responsively loaded, and Aldrich and myself possessing the floor and properly fortified. Cable told Mrs. Clemens, when he returned here, that he seemed to have been entertaining himself with horses, and had a dreamy idea that he must have gone to Boston in a cattle-car. It was a very large time. He called it an orgy. And no doubt it was, viewed from his standpoint.

Osgood wanted Mark Twain to lecture that fall, as preliminary advertising for the book, with "Life on the Mississippi" as his subject. Osgood was careful to make this proposition by mail, and probably it was just as well; for if there was any single straw that could have broken the back of Clemens's endurance and made him violent at this particular time, it was a proposition to go back on the platform. His answer to Osgood has not been preserved.

Clemens spoke little that winter. In February he addressed the Monday Evening Club on "What is Happiness?" presenting a theory which in later years he developed as a part of his "gospel," and promulgated in a privately printed volume, *What is Man?* It is the postulate already mentioned in connection with his reading of Lecky, that every human action, bad or good, is the result of a selfish impulse; that is to say, the result of a desire for the greater content of spirit. It is not a new idea; philosophers in all ages have considered it, and accepted or rejected it, according to their temperament and teachings, but it was startling and apparently new to the Monday Evening Club. They scoffed and jeered at it; denounced it as a manifest falsity. They did not quite see then that there may be two sorts of selfishness—brutal and divine; that he who sacrifices others to himself exemplifies the first, whereas he who sacrifices himself for others personifies the second—the divine contenting of his soul by serving the happiness of his fellow-men. Mark Twain left this admonition in furtherance of that better sort:

"Diligently train your ideals upward, and still upward, toward a summit where you will find your chiefest pleasure, in conduct which, while contenting you, will be sure to confer benefits upon your neighbor and the community."

It is a divine admonition, even if, in its suggested moral freedom, it does seem to conflict with that other theory—the inevitable sequence of cause and effect, descending from the primal atom. There is seeming irrelevance in introducing this matter here; but it has a chronological relation, and it presents a mental aspect of the time. Clemens was forty-eight, and becoming more and more the philosopher; also, in logic at least, a good deal of a pessimist. He made a birthday aphorism on the subject:

"The man who is a pessimist before he is forty-eight knows too much; the man who is an optimist after he is forty-eight knows too little."

He was never more than a pessimist in theory at any time. In practice he would be a visionary; a builder of dreams and fortunes, a veritable Colonel Sellers to the end of his days.

CXLII

"LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI"

THE Mississippi book was completed at last and placed in Osgood's hands for publication. Clemens was immensely fond of Osgood. Osgood would come down to Hartford and spend days discussing plans and playing billiards, which to Mark Twain's mind was the proper way to conduct business. Besides, there was Webster, who by this time, or a very little later, had the word "publisher" printed in his letter-heads, and was truly that, so far as the new book was concerned. Osgood had become little more than its manufacturer, shipping-agent, and accountant. It should be added that he made the book well, though somewhat expensively. He was unaccustomed to getting out big subscription volumes. His taste ran to the artistic, expensive product.

"That book cost me fifty thousand dollars to make," Clemens once declared. "Bliss could have built a whole library for that sum. But Osgood was a lovely fellow."

Life on the Mississippi was issued about the middle of May. It was a handsome book of its kind and a successful book, but not immediately a profitable one, because of the manner of its issue. It was experimental, and experiments are likely to be costly, even when successful in the final result.

Among other things, it pronounced the final doom of kaolatype. The artists who drew the pictures for it declined to draw them if they were to be reproduced by that process, or indeed unless some one of the lately discovered photographic processes was used. Furthermore, the latter were much cheaper, and it was to the advantage of Clemens himself to repudiate kaolatype, even for his own work.

Webster was ordered to wind up the last ends of the engraving business with as little sacrifice as possible, and attend entirely to more profitable affairs—*viz.*, the distribution of books.

As literature, the Mississippi book will rank with Mark Twain's best—so far, at least, as the first twenty chapters of it are concerned. Earlier in this history these have been sufficiently commented upon. They constitute a literary memorial seemingly as enduring as the river itself.

Concerning the remaining chapters of the book, they are also literature, but of a different class. The difference is about the same as that between *A Tramp Abroad* and the *Innocents*. It is the difference between the labors of love and duty; between art and industry, literature and journalism.

But the last is hardly fair. It is journalism, but it is literary journalism, and there are unquestionably areas that are purely literary, and not journalistic at all. There would always be those in any book of travel he might write. The story of the river revisited is an interesting theme; and if the revisiting had been done, let us say eight or ten years earlier, before he had become a theoretical pessimist, and before the river itself had become a background for pessimism, the tale might have had more of the literary glamour and illusion, even if less that is otherwise valuable.

Life on the Mississippi has been always popular in Germany. The Emperor William of Germany once assured Mark Twain that it was his favorite American book, and on the same evening the *portier* of the author's lodging in Berlin echoed the Emperor's opinion.

Paul Lindau, a distinguished German author and critic, in an interview at the time the Mississippi book appeared, spoke of the general delight of his countrymen in its author. When he was asked, "But have not the Germans been offended by Mark Twain's strictures on their customs and language in his *Tramp Abroad?*" he replied, "We know what we are and how we look, and the fanciful picture presented to our eyes gives us only food for laughter, not cause for resentment. The jokes he made on our long words, our inverted sentences, and the position of the verb have really led to a reform in style which will end in making our language as compact and crisp as the French or English. I regard Mark Twain as the foremost humorist of the age."

Howells, traveling through Europe, found Lindau's final sentiment echoed elsewhere, and he found something more: in Europe Mark Twain was already highly regarded as a serious writer. Thomas Hardy said to Howells one night at dinner:

"Why don't people understand that Mark Twain is not merely a great humorist? He is a very remarkable fellow in a very different way."

The Rev. Dr. Parker, returning from England just then, declared that, wherever he went among literary people, the talk was about Mark Twain; also that on two occasions, when he had ventured diffidently to say that he knew that author personally, he was at once so evidently regarded as lying for effect that he felt guilty, and looked it, and did not venture to say it any more; thus, in a manner, practising untruth to save his reputation for veracity.

That the Mississippi book throughout did much to solidify this foreign opinion of Mark Twain's literary importance cannot be doubted, and it is one of his books that will live longest in the memory of men.

CXLIII

A GUEST OF ROYALTY

FOR purposes of copyright another trip to Canada was necessary, and when the newspapers announced (May, 1883) that Mark Twain was about to cross the border there came one morning the following telegram:

> Meeting of Literary and Scientific Society at Ottawa from 22d to 26th. It would give me much pleasure if you could come and be my guest during that time.
>
> LORNE.

The Marquis of Lorne, then Governor-General of Canada, was the husband of Queen Victoria's daughter, the Princess Louise. The invitation was therefore in the nature of a command. Clemens obeyed it graciously enough, and with a feeling of exaltation no doubt. He had been honored by the noble and the great in many lands, but this was royalty—English royalty—paying a tribute to an American writer whom neither the Marquis nor the Princess, his wife, had ever seen. They had invited him because they had cared enough for his books to make them wish to see him, to have him as a guest in Rideau Hall, their home. Mark Twain was democratic. A king to him was no more than any other man; rather less if he were not a good king. But there was something national in this tribute; and, besides, Lord Lorne and the Princess Louise were the kind of sovereigns that honored their rank, instead of being honored by it.

It is a good deal like a fairy tale when you think of it;

the barefooted boy of Hannibal, who had become a printer, a pilot, a rough-handed miner, being summoned, not so many years later, by royalty as one of America's foremost men of letters. The honor was no greater than many others he had received, certainly not greater than the calls of Canon Kingsley and Robert Browning and Turgenieff at his London hotel lodgings, but it was of a less usual kind.

Clemens enjoyed his visit. Princess Louise and the Marquis of Lorne kept him with them almost continually, and were loath to let him go. Once they took him tobogganing—an exciting experience.

It happened that during his stay with them the opening of the Canadian Parliament took place. Lord Lorne and the principal dignitaries of state entered one carriage, and in a carriage behind them followed Princess Louise with Mark Twain. As they approached the Parliament House the customary salute was fired. Clemens pretended to the Princess considerable gratification. The temptation was too strong to resist:

"Your Highness," he said, "I have had other compliments paid to me, but none equal to this one. I have never before had a salute fired in my honor."

Returning to Hartford, he sent copies of his books to Lord Lorne, and to the Princess a special copy of that absurd manual, *The New Guide of the Conversation in Portuguese and English*, for which he had written an introduction.[1]

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[1] A serious work, in Portugal, though issued by Osgood ('83) as a joke. Clemens in the introduction says: "Its delicious, unconscious ridiculousness and its enchanting naïveté are as supreme and unapproachable in their way as Shakespeare's sublimities." An extract, the closing paragraph from the book's preface, will illustrate his meaning:

"We expect then, who the little book (for the care that we wrote him, and for her typographical correction), that may be worth the acceptation of the studious persons, and especially of the Youth, at which we dedicate him particularly."

CXLIV

A SUMMER LITERARY HARVEST

ARRIVING at the farm in June, Clemens had a fresh crop of ideas for stories of many lengths and varieties. His note-book of that time is full of motifs and plots, most of them of that improbable and extravagant kind which tended to defeat any literary purpose, whether humorous or otherwise. It seems worth while setting down one or more of these here, for they are characteristic of the myriad conceptions that came and went, and beyond these written memoranda left no trace behind. Here is a fair example of many:

> Two men starving on a raft. The pauper has a Boston cracker, resolves to keep it till the multimillionaire is beginning to starve, then make him pay $50,000 for it. Millionaire agrees. Pauper's cupidity rises, resolves to wait and get more; twenty-four hours later asks him a million for the cracker. Millionaire agrees. Pauper has a wild dream of becoming enormously rich off his cracker; backs down; lies all night building castles in the air; next day raises his price higher and higher, till millionaire has offered $100,000,000, every cent he has in the world. Pauper accepts. Millionaire: "Now give it to me."
>
> Pauper: "No; it isn't a trade until you sign documental history of the transaction and make an oath to pay."
>
> While pauper is finishing the document millionaire sees a ship. When pauper says, "Sign and take the cracker," millionaire smiles a smile, declines, and points to the ship.

Yet this is hardly more extravagant than another idea that is mentioned repeatedly among the notes—that of an otherwise penniless man wandering about London with a single million-pound bank-note in his possession, a motif which developed into a very good story indeed.

IDEA FOR "STORMFIELD'S VISIT TO HEAVEN"

In modern times the halls of heaven are warmed by registers connected with hell; and this is greatly applauded by Jonathan Edwards, Calvin, Baxter and Company, because it adds a new pang to the sinner's sufferings to know that the very fire which tortures him is the means of making the righteous comfortable.

Then there was to be another story, in which the various characters were to have a weird, pestilential nomenclature; such as "Lockjaw Harris," "Influenza Smith," "Sinapism Davis," and a dozen or two more, a perfect outbreak of disorders.

Another—probably the inspiration of some very hot afternoon—was to present life in the interior of an iceberg, where a colony would live for a generation or two, drifting about in a vast circular current year after year, subsisting on polar bears and other Arctic game.

An idea which he followed out and completed was the *1002d Arabian Night*, in which Scheherazade continues her stories, until she finally talks the Sultan to death. That was a humorous idea, certainly; but when Howells came home and read it in the usual way he declared that, while the opening was killingly funny, when he got into the story itself it seemed to him that he was "made a fellow-sufferer with the Sultan from Scheherazade's prolixity."

"On the whole," he said, "it is not your best, nor your second best; but all the way it skirts a certain kind of fun which you can't afford to indulge in."

And that was the truth. So the tale, neatly typewritten, retired to seclusion, and there remains to this day.

Clemens had one inspiration that summer which was not directly literary, but historical, due to his familiarity with English dates. He wrote Twichell:

> Day before yesterday, feeling not in condition for writing, I left the study, but I couldn't hold in—had to do something; so I spent eight hours in the sun with a yardstick, measuring off the reigns of the English kings on the roads in these grounds, from William the Conqueror to 1883, calculating to invent an open-air game which shall fill the children's heads with dates without study. I give each king's reign one foot of space to the year and drive one stake in the ground to mark the beginning of each reign, and I make the children call the stake by the king's name. You can stand in the door and take a bird's-eye view of English monarchy, from the Conqueror to Edward IV.; then you can turn and follow the road up the hill to the study and beyond with an opera-glass, and bird's-eye view the rest of it to 1883.
>
> You can mark the sharp difference in the *length* of reigns by the varying distances of the stakes apart. You can see Richard II., two feet; Oliver Cromwell, two feet; James II., three feet, and so on—and then big skips; pegs standing forty-five, forty-six, fifty, fifty-six, and sixty feet apart (Elizabeth, Victoria, Edward III., Henry III., and George III.). By the way, third's a lucky number for length of days, isn't it? Yes, sir; by my scheme you get a realizing notion of the *time* occupied by reigns.
>
> The reason it took me eight hours was because, with little Jean's interrupting assistance, I had to measure from the Conquest to the end of Henry VI. three times over, and besides I had to whittle out all those pegs.
>
> I did a full day's work and a third over, yesterday, but was full of my game after I went to bed trying to fit it for indoors. So I didn't get to sleep till pretty late; but when I did go off I had contrived a new way to play my history game with cards and a board.

We may be sure the idea of the game would possess him, once it got a fair start like that. He decided to save the human race that year with a history game. When he had got the children fairly going and interested in playing it, he adapted it to a cribbage-board, and spent his days and nights working it out and perfecting it to a degree where the world at large might learn all the facts of all the histories, not only without effort, but with an actual hunger for chronology. He would have a game not only of the English kings, but of the kings of every other nation; likewise of great statesmen, vice-chancellors, churchmen, of celebrities in every line. He would prepare a book to accompany these games. Each game would contain one thousand facts, while the book would contain eight thousand; it would be a veritable encyclopedia. He would organize clubs throughout the United States for playing the game; prizes were to be given. Experts would take it up. He foresaw a department in every newspaper devoted to the game and its problems, instead of to chess and whist and other useless diversions. He wrote to Orion, and set him to work gathering facts and dates by the bushel. He wrote to Webster, sent him a plan, and ordered him to apply for the patent without delay. Patents must also be applied for abroad. With all nations playing this great game, very likely it would produce millions in royalties; and so, in the true Sellers fashion, the iridescent bubble was blown larger and larger, until finally it blew up. The game on paper had become so large, so elaborate, so intricate, that no one could play it. Yet the first idea was a good one: the king stakes driven along the driveway and up the hillside of Quarry Farm. The children enjoyed it, and played it through many sweet summer afternoons. Once, in the days when he had grown old, he wrote, remembering:

> Among the principal merits of the games which we played by help of the pegs were these: that they had to be played in the open air, and that they compelled brisk exercise. The peg of William the Conqueror stood in front of the house; one could stand near the Conqueror and have all English history skeletonized and landmarked and mile-posted under his eye. . . . The eye has a good memory. Many years have gone by and

the pegs have disappeared, but I still see them and each in its place; and no king's name falls upon my ear without my seeing his pegs at once, and noticing just how many feet of space he takes up along the road.

It turned out an important literary year after all. In the Mississippi book he had used a chapter from the story he had been working at from time to time for a number of years, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.* Reading over the manuscript now he found his interest in it sharp and fresh, his inspiration renewed. The trip down the river had revived it. The interest in the game became quiescent, and he set to work to finish the story at a dead heat.

To Howells, August 22 (1883), he wrote:

> I have written eight or nine hundred manuscript pages in such a brief space of time that I mustn't name the number of days; I shouldn't believe it myself, and of course couldn't expect you to. I used to restrict myself to four and five hours a day and five days in the week, but this time I have wrought from breakfast till 5.15 P.M. six days in the week, and once or twice I smouched a Sunday when the boss wasn't looking. Nothing is half so good as literature hooked on Sunday, on the sly.

He refers to the game, though rather indifferently.

> When I wrote you I thought I *had* it; whereas I was merely entering upon the initiatory difficulties of it. I might have known it wouldn't be an easy job or somebody would have invented a decent historical game long ago—a thing which nobody has done.

Notwithstanding the fact that he was working at *Huck* with enthusiasm, he seems to have been in no hurry to revise it for publication, either as a serial or as a book. But the fact that he persevered until *Huck Finn* at last found complete utterance was of itself a sufficient matter for congratulation.

CXLV

HOWELLS AND CLEMENS WRITE A PLAY

Before Howells went abroad Clemens had written:

> Now I think that the play for you to write would be one entitled, "Colonel Mulberry Sellers in Age" (75), with Lafayette Hawkins (at 50) still sticking to him and believing in him and calling him "My lord." He [Sellers] is a specialist and a scientist in various ways. Your refined people and purity of speech would make the best possible background, and when you are done, I could take your manuscript and rewrite the Colonel's speeches, and make him properly extravagant, and I would let the play go to Raymond, and bind him up with a contract that would give him the bellyache every time he read it. Shall we think this over, or drop it as being nonsense?

Howells, returned and settled in Boston once more, had revived an interest in the play idea. He corresponded with Clemens concerning it and agreed that the American Claimant, Leathers, should furnish the initial impulse of the drama.

They decided to revive Colonel Sellers and make him the heir; Colonel Sellers in old age, more wildly extravagant than ever, with new schemes, new patents, new methods of ameliorating the ills of mankind.

Howells came down to Hartford from Boston full of enthusiasm. He found Clemens with some ideas of the plan jotted down: certain effects and situations which seemed to him amusing, but there was no general scheme of action. Howells, telling of it, says:

> I felt authorized to make him observe that his scheme was as nearly nothing as chaos could be. He agreed hilariously with me, and was willing to let it stand in proof of his entire dramatic inability.

Howells, in turn, proposed a plan which Clemens approved, and they set to work. Howells could imitate Clemens's literary manner, and they had a riotously jubilant fortnight working out their humors. Howells has told about it in his book, and he once related it to the writer of this memoir. He said:

"Clemens took one scene and I another. We had loads and loads of fun about it. We cracked our sides laughing over it as it went along. We thought it mighty good, and I think to this day that it was mighty good. We called the play 'Colonel Sellers.' We revived him. Clemens had a notion of Sellers as a spiritual medium—there was a good deal of excitement about spiritualism then; he also had a notion of Sellers leading a women's temperance crusade. We conceived the idea of Sellers wanting to try, in the presence of the audience, how a man felt who had fallen, through drink. Sellers was to end with a sort of corkscrew performance on the stage. He always wore a marvelous fire extinguisher, one of his inventions, strapped on his back, so in any sudden emergency, he could give proof of its effectiveness."

In connection with the extinguisher, Howells provided Sellers with a pair of wings, which Sellers declared would enable him to float around in any altitude where the flames might break out. The extinguisher, was not to be charged with water or any sort of liquid, but with Greek fire, on the principle that like cures like; in other words, the building was to be inoculated with Greek fire against the ordinary conflagration. Of course the whole thing was as absurd as possible, and, reading the old manuscript to-day, one is impressed with the roaring humor of some of the scenes, and with the wild extravagance of the farce motive, not wholly warranted by the previous character of Sellers, unless, indeed, he had gone stark mad. It is, in fact, Sellers caricatured. The gentle, tender side of Sellers—the best side—the side which Clemens and Howells themselves cared for most, is not there. Chapter III of Mark Twain's novel, *The American Claimant*, contains a scene between Colonel Sellers and Washington Hawkins which presents the extravagance of the Colonel's materialization scheme. It is a modified version of one of the scenes in the play, and is as amusing and unoffending as any.

The authors' rollicking joy in their work convinced them that they had produced a masterpiece for which the public in general, and the actors in particular, were waiting. Howells went back to Boston tired out, but elate in the prospect of imminent fortune.

CXLVI

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

MEANTIME, while Howells had been in Hartford working at the play with Clemens, Matthew Arnold had arrived in Boston. On inquiring for Howells at his home, the visitor was told that he had gone to see Mark Twain. Arnold was perhaps the only literary Englishman left who had not accepted Mark Twain at his larger value. He seemed surprised and said:

"Oh, but he doesn't like *that* sort of thing, does he?"

To which Mrs. Howells replied:

"He likes Mr. Clemens very much, and he thinks him one of the greatest men he ever knew."

Arnold proceeded to Hartford to lecture, and one night Howells and Clemens went to meet him at a reception. Says Howells:

> While his hand laxly held mine in greeting I saw his eyes fixed intensely on the other side of the room. "Who—who in the world is that?" I looked and said, "Oh, that is Mark Twain." I do not remember just how their instant encounter was contrived by Arnold's wish, but I have the impression that they were not parted for long during the evening, and the next night Arnold, as if still under the glamour of that potent presence, was at Clemens's house.

He came there to dine with the Twichells and the Rev. Dr. Edwin P. Parker. Dr. Parker and Arnold left together, and, walking quietly homeward, discussed the remarkable creature whose presence they had just left.

Clemens had been at his best that night—at his humorous best. He had kept a perpetual gale of laughter going, with a string of comment and anecdote of a kind which Twichell once declared the world had never before seen and would never see again. Arnold seemed dazed by it, unable to come out from under its influence. He repeated some of the things Mark Twain had said; thoughtfully, as if trying to analyze their magic. Then he asked solemnly:

"And is he *never* serious?"

And Dr. Parker as solemnly answered:

"Mr. Arnold, he is the most serious man in the world."

Dr. Parker, recalling this incident, remembered also that Protap Chunder Mazoomdar, a Hindoo Christian prelate of high rank, visited Hartford in 1883, and that his one desire was to meet Mark Twain. In some memoranda of this visit Dr. Parker has written:

> I said that Mark Twain was a friend of mine, and we would immediately go to his house. He was all eagerness, and I perceived that I had risen greatly in this most refined and cultivated gentleman's estimation. Arriving at Mr. Clemens's residence, I promptly sought a brief private interview with my friend for his enlightenment concerning the distinguished visitor, after which they were introduced and spent a long while together. In due time Mazoomdar came forth with Mark's likeness and autograph, and as we walked away his whole air and manner seemed to say, with Simeon of old, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace!"

CXLVII

THE FORTUNES OF A PLAY

HOWELLS is of the impression that the "Claimant" play had been offered to other actors before Raymond was made aware of it; but there are letters (to Webster) which indicate that Raymond was to see the play first, though Clemens declares, in a letter of instruction, that he *hopes Raymond will not take it.* Then he says:

> Why do I offer him the play at all? For these reasons: he plays that character well; there are not thirty actors in the country who can do it better; and, too, he has a sort of sentimental right to be *offered* the piece, though no moral, or legal, or other kind of right.
>
> Therefore we do offer it to him; but only once, not twice. Let us have no hemming and hawing; make short, sharp work of the business. I decline to have any correspondence with R. myself in *any* way.

This was at the end of November, 1883, while the play was still being revised. Negotiations with Raymond had already begun, though he does not appear to have actually seen the play during that theatrical season, and many and various were the attempts made to place it elsewhere; always with one result—that each actor or manager, in the end, declared it to be strictly a Raymond play. The thing was hanging fire for nearly a year, altogether, while they were waiting on Raymond, who had a profitable play, and was in no hurry for the recrudescence of Sellers. Howells tells how he eventually took the manuscript to

Raymond, whom he found "in a mood of sweet reasonableness" at one of Osgood's luncheons. Raymond said he could not do the play then, but was sure he would like it for the coming season, and in any case would be glad to read it.

In due time Raymond reported favorably on the play, at least so far as the first act was concerned, but he objected to the materialization feature and to Sellers as claimant for the English earldom. He asked that these features be eliminated, or at least much ameliorated; but as these constituted the backbone and purpose of the whole play, Clemens and Howells decided that what was left would be hardly worth while. Raymond finally agreed to try the play as it was in one of the larger towns —Howells thinks in Buffalo. A week later the manuscript came back to Webster, who had general charge of the business negotiations, as indeed he had of all Mark Twain's affairs at this time, and with it a brief line:

> DEAR SIR,—I have just finished rereading the play, and am convinced that in its present form it would not prove successful. I return the manuscript by express to your address.
>
> Thanking you for your courtesy, I am,
>
> Yours truly, JOHN T. RAYMOND.
>
> P. S.—If the play is altered and made longer I will be pleased to read it again.

In his former letter Raymond had declared that "Sellers, while a very sanguine man, was not a lunatic, and no one but a lunatic could for a moment imagine that he had done such a work" (meaning the materialization). Clearly Raymond wanted a more serious presentation, something akin to his earlier success, and on the whole we can hardly blame him. But the authors had faith in their performance as it stood, and agreed they would make no change.

Finally a well-known elocutionist, named Burbank, conceived the notion of impersonating Raymond as well as Sellers, making of it a sort of double burlesque, and agreed to take the play on those terms. Burbank came to Hartford and showed what he could do. Howells and Clemens agreed to give him the play, and they hired the old Lyceum Theater for a week, at seven hundred dollars, for its trial presentation. Daniel Frohman promoted it. Clemens and Howells went over the play and made some changes, but they were not as hilarious over it or as full of enthusiasm as they had been in the beginning. Howells put in a night of suffering—long, dark hours of hot and cold waves of fear—and rising next morning from a tossing bed, wrote: "Here's a play which every manager has put out-of-doors and which every actor known to us has refused, and now we go and give it to an elocutioner. We are fools."

Clemens hurried over to Boston to consult with Howells, and in the end they agreed to pay the seven hundred dollars for the theater, take the play off and give Burbank his freedom.[1] But Clemens's faith in it did not immediately die. Howells relinquished all right and title in it, and Clemens started it out with Burbank and a traveling company, doing one-night stands, and kept it going for a week or more at his own expense. It never reached New York.

"And yet," says Howells, "I think now that if it had come it would have been successful. So hard does the faith of the unsuccessful dramatist die."

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[1] This was as late as the spring of 1886, at which time Howells's faith in the play was exceedingly shaky. In one letter he wrote: "It is a lunatic that we have created, and while a lunatic in one act might amuse, I'm afraid that in three he would simply bore."

And again:

"As it stands, I believe the thing will fail, and it would be a disgrace to have it succeed."

CXLVIII

CABLE AND HIS GREAT JOKE

MEANWHILE, with the completion of the Sellers play, Clemens had flung himself into dramatic writing once more with a new and more violent impetuosity than ever. Howells had hardly returned to Boston when he wrote:

> *Now* let's write a tragedy.
>
> The inclosed is not fancy, it is *history;* except that the little girl was a passing stranger, and not kin to any of the parties. I read the incident in Carlyle's *Cromwell* a year ago, and made a note in my note-book; stumbled on the note to-day, and wrote up the closing scene of a possible tragedy, to see how it might work.
>
> If we made this colonel a grand fellow, and gave him a wife to suit—hey? It's right in the big historical times—war; Cromwell in big, picturesque power, and all that.
>
> Come, let's do this tragedy, and do it well. Curious, but didn't Florence want a Cromwell? But Cromwell would not be the chief figure here.

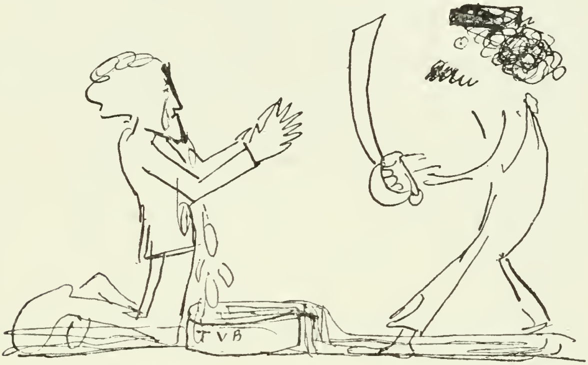
It was the closing scene of that pathetic passage in history from which he would later make his story, "The Death Disc." Howells was too tired and too occupied to undertake immediately a new dramatic labor, so Clemens went steaming ahead alone.

> My billiard-table is stacked up with books relating to the Sandwich Islands; the walls are upholstered with scraps of paper penciled with notes drawn from them. I have saturated

> myself with knowledge of that unimaginably beautiful land and that most strange and fascinating people. And I have begun a story. Its hidden motive will illustrate a but-little considered fact in human nature: that the religious folly you are born in you will *die* in, no matter what apparently reasonabler religious folly may seem to have taken its place; meanwhile abolished and obliterated it. I start Bill Ragsdale at eleven years of age, and the heroine at four, in the midst of the ancient idolatrous system, with its picturesque and amazing customs and superstitions, three months before the arrival of the missionaries and the erection of a shallow Christianity upon the ruins of the old paganism.
>
> Then these two will become educated Christians and highly civilized.
>
> And then I will jump fifteen years and do Ragsdale's leper business. When we come to dramatize, we can draw a deal of matter from the story, all ready to our hand.

He made elaborate preparations for the Sandwich Islands story, which he and Howells would dramatize later, and within the space of a few weeks he actually did dramatize *The Prince and the Pauper* and *Tom Sawyer*, and was prodding Webster to find proper actors or managers; stipulating at first severe and arbitrary terms, which were gradually modified, as one after another of the prospective customers found these dramatic wares unsuited to their needs. Mark Twain was one of the most dramatic creatures that ever lived, but he lacked the faculty of stage arrangement of the dramatic idea. It is one of the commonest defects in the literary make-up; also one of the hardest to realize and to explain.

The winter of 1883–84 was a gay one in the Clemens home. Henry Irving was among those entertained, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Aldrich and his wife, Howells of course, and George W. Cable. Cable had now permanently left the South for the promised land which all authors of the South and West seek eventually, and had in due course made his way to Hartford. Clemens took Cable's fortunes in hand, as he had done with many another, invited him to his home, and undertook to open negotiations with the American Publishing Company, of which Frank Bliss was now the manager, for the improvement of his fortunes.



AN APOLOGY FROM SAINT-GAUDENS FOR A BROKEN ENGAGEMENT

Cable had been giving readings from his stories and had somewhere picked up the measles. He suddenly came down with the complaint during his visit to Clemens, and his case was a violent one. It required the constant attendance of a trained nurse and one or two members of the household to pull him through.

In the course of time he was convalescent, and when contagion was no longer to be feared guests were invited in for his entertainment. At one of these gatherings, Cable produced a curious book, which he said had been lent to him by Prof. Francis Bacon, of New Haven, as a great rarity. It was a little privately printed pamphlet written by a Southern youth, named S. Watson Wolston, a Yale student of 1845, and was an absurd romance of the hyperflorid, grandiloquent sort, entitled, "Love Triumphant, or the Enemy Conquered." Its heroine's name was Ambulinia, and its flowery, half-meaningless periods and impossible situations delighted Clemens beyond measure. He begged Cable to lend it to him, to read at the Saturday Morning Club, declaring that he certainly must own the book, at whatever cost. Henry C. Robinson, who was present, remembered having seen a copy in his youth, and Twichell thought he recalled such a book on sale in New Haven during his college days. Twichell said nothing as to any purpose in the matter; but somewhat later, being in New Haven, he stepped into the old book-store and found the same proprietor, who remembered very well the book and its author. Twichell rather fearfully asked if by any chance a copy of it might still be obtained.

"Well," was the answer, "I undertook to put my cellar in order the other day, and found about a cord of them down there. I think I can supply you."

Twichell took home six of the books at ten cents each, and on their first spring walk to Talcott's Tower casually mentioned to Clemens the quest for the rare Ambulinia. But Clemens had given up the pursuit. New York dealers had reported no success in the matter. The book was no longer in existence.

"What would you give for a copy?" asked Twichell.

Clemens became excited.

"It isn't a question of price," he said; "that would be for the owner to set if I could find him."

Twichell drew a little package from his pocket.

"Well, Mark," he said, "here are six copies of that book, to begin with. If that isn't enough, I can get you a wagon-load."

It was enough. But it did not deter Clemens in his purpose, which was to immortalize the little book by pointing out its peculiar charms. He did this later, and eventually included the entire story, with comments, in one of his own volumes.

Clemens and Twichell did not always walk that spring. The early form of bicycle, the prehistoric high-wheel, had come into vogue, and they each got one and attempted its conquest. They practised in the early morning hours on Farmington Avenue, which was wide and smooth, and they had an instructor, a young German, who, after a morning or two, regarded Mark Twain helplessly and said:

"Mr. Clemens, it's remarkable—you can fall off of a bicycle more different ways than the man that invented it."

They were curious things, those old high-wheel machines. You were perched away up in the air, with the feeling that you were likely at any moment to strike a pebble or something that would fling you forward with damaging results. Frequently that is what happened. The word "header" seems to have grown out of that early bicycling period. Perhaps Mark Twain invented it. He had enough experience to do it. He always declared afterward that he invented all the new bicycle profanity that has since come into general use. Once he wrote:

> There was a row of low stepping-stones across one end of the street, a measured yard apart. Even after I got so I could steer pretty fairly I was so afraid of those stones that I always hit them. They gave me the worst falls I ever got in that street, except those which I got from dogs. I have seen it stated that no expert is quick enough to run over a dog; that a dog is always able to skip out of his way. I think that that may be true; but I think that the reason he couldn't run over the dog was because he was trying to. I did not try to run over any dog. But I ran over every dog that came along. I think it makes a great deal of difference. If you try to run over the dog he knows how to calculate, but if you are trying to miss him he does not know how to calculate, and is liable to jump the wrong way every time. It was always so in my experience. Even

when I could not hit a wagon I could hit a dog that came to see me practise. They all liked to see me practise, and they all came, for there was very little going on in our neighborhood to entertain a dog.

He conquered, measurably, that old, discouraging thing, and he and Twichell would go on excursions, sometimes as far as Wethersfield or to the tower. It was a pleasant change, at least it was an interesting one; but bicycling on the high wheel was never a popular diversion with Mark Twain, and his enthusiasm in the sport had died before the "safety" came along.

He had his machine sent out to Elmira, but there were too many hills in Chemung County, and after one brief excursion he came in, limping and pushing his wheel, and did not try it again.

To return to Cable. When the 1st of April (1884) approached he concluded it would be a good time to pay off his debt of gratitude for his recent entertainment in the Clemens's home. He went to work at it systematically. He had a "private and confidential" circular letter printed, and he mailed it to one hundred and fifty of Mark Twain's literary friends in Boston, Hartford, Springfield, New York, Brooklyn, Washington, and elsewhere, suggesting that they write to him, so that their letters would reach him simultaneously April 1st, asking for his autograph. No stamps or cards were to be inclosed for reply, and it was requested that "no stranger to Mr. Clemens and no minor" should take part. Mrs. Clemens was let into the secret, so that she would see to it that her husband did not reject his mail or commit it to the flames unopened.

It would seem that every one receiving the invitation must have responded to it, for on the morning of April 1st a stupefying mass of letters was unloaded on Mark Twain's table. He did not know what to make of it, and Mrs. Clemens stood off to watch the results. The first one he opened was from Dean Sage, a friend whom he valued highly. Sage wrote from Brooklyn:

> DEAR CLEMENS,—I have recently been asked by a young lady who unfortunately has a mania for autograph-collecting, but otherwise is a charming character, and comely enough to suit your fastidious taste, to secure for her the sign manual of the few distinguished persons fortunate enough to have my acquaintance. In enumerating them to her, after mentioning the names of Geo. Shepard Page, Joe Michell, Capt. Isaiah Ryndus, Mr. Willard, Dan Mace, and J. L. Sullivan, I came to yours. "Oh!" said she, "I have read all his works—*Little Breeches*, *The Heathen Chinee*, and the rest—and think them delightful. Do oblige me by asking him for his autograph, preceded by any little sentiment that may occur to him, provided it is not too short."
>
> Of course I promised, and hope you will oblige me by sending some little thing addressed to Miss Oakes.
>
> We are all pretty well at home just now, though indisposition has been among us for the past fortnight. With regards to Mrs. Clemens and the children, in which my wife joins,
>
> Yours truly, DEAN SAGE.

It amused and rather surprised him, and it fooled him completely; but when he picked up a letter from Brander Matthews, asking, in some absurd fashion, for his signature, and another from Ellen Terry, and from Irving, and from Stedman, and from Warner, and Waring, and H. C. Bunner, and Sarony, and Laurence Hutton, and John Hay, and R. U. Johnson, and Modjeska, the size and quality of the joke began to overawe him. He was delighted, of course; for really it was a fine compliment, in its way, and most of the letters were distinctly amusing. Some of them asked for autographs by the yard, some by the pound. Henry Irving said:

> I have just got back from a very late rehearsal—five o'clock—very tired—but there will be no rest till I get your autograph.

Some requested him to sit down and copy a few chapters from *The Innocents Abroad* for them or to send an original manuscript. Others requested that his autograph be attached to a check of interesting size. John Hay suggested that he copy a hymn, a few hundred lines of Young's "Night Thoughts," and an equal amount of Pollak's "Course of Time."

> I want my boy to form a taste for serious and elevated poetry, and it will add considerable commercial value to have them in your handwriting.

Altogether the reading of the letters gave him a delightful day, and his admiration for Cable grew accordingly. Cable, too, was pleased with the success of his joke, though he declared he would never risk such a thing again. A newspaper of the time reports him as saying:

> I never suffered so much agony as for a few days previous to the 1st of April. I was afraid the letters would reach Mark when he was in affliction, in which case all of us would never have ceased trying to make it up to him.
>
> When I visited Mark we used to open our budgets of letters together at breakfast. We used to sing out whenever we struck an autograph-hunter. I think the idea came from that. The first person I spoke to about it was Robert Underwood Johnson, of the *Century*. My most enthusiastic ally was the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. We never thought it would get into the papers. I never played a practical joke before. I never will again, certainly.

Mark Twain in those days did not encourage the regular autograph-collectors, and seldom paid any attention to their requests for his signature. He changed all this in later years, and kept a supply always on hand to satisfy every request; but in those earlier days he had no patience with collecting fads, and it required a particularly pleasing application to obtain his signature.

CXLIX

MARK TWAIN IN BUSINESS

SAMUEL CLEMENS by this time was definitely engaged in the publishing business. Webster had a complete office with assistants at 658 Broadway, and had acquired a pretty thorough and practical knowledge of subscription publishing. He was a busy, industrious young man, tirelessly energetic, and with a good deal of confidence, by no means unnecessary to commercial success. He placed this mental and physical capital against Mark Twain's inspiration and financial backing, and the combination of Charles L. Webster & Co. seemed likely to be a strong one.

Already, in the spring of 1884, Webster had the new Mark Twain book, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, well in hand, and was on the watch for promising subscription books by other authors. Clemens, with his usual business vision and eye for results, with a generous disregard of detail, was supervising the larger preliminaries, and fulminating at the petty distractions and difficulties as they came along. Certain plays he was trying to place were enough to keep him pretty thoroughly upset during this period, and proof-reading never added to his happiness. To Howells he wrote:

> My days are given up to cursings, both loud and deep, for I am reading the *Huck Finn* proofs. They don't make a very great many mistakes, but those that do occur are of a nature that make a man swear his teeth loose.

Whereupon Howells promptly wrote him that he would help him out with the *Huck Finn* proofs for the pleasure of reading the story. Clemens, among other things, was trying to place a patent grape-scissors, invented by Howells's father, so that there was, in some degree, an equivalent for the heavy obligation. That it was a heavy one we gather from his fervent acknowledgment:

> It took my breath away, and I haven't recovered it yet, entirely—I mean the generosity of your proposal to read the proofs of *Huck Finn.*
>
> Now, if you *mean* it, old man—if you are in *earnest*—proceed, in God's name, and be by me forever blessed. I can't conceive of a rational man deliberately piling such an atrocious job upon himself. But if there be such a man, and you be that man, *pile it on.* The proof-reading of *The Prince and the Pauper* cost me the last rags of my religion.

Clemens decided to have the *Huckleberry Finn* book illustrated after his own ideas. He looked through the various comic papers to see if he could find the work of some new man that appealed to his fancy. In the pages of *Life* he discovered some comic pictures illustrating the possibility of applying electrical hurriers to messenger boys, waiters, etc. The style and the spirit of these things amused him. He instructed Webster to look up the artist, who proved to be a young man, E. W. Kemble by name, later one of our foremost cartoonists. Webster engaged Kemble and put the manuscript in his hands. Through the publication of certain chapters of *Huck Finn* in the *Century Magazine*, Kemble was brought to the notice of its editors, who wrote Clemens that they were profoundly indebted to him for unearthing "such a gem of an illustrator."

Clemens, encouraged and full of enthusiasm, now endeavored to interest himself in the practical details of manufacture, but his stock of patience was light and the details were many. His early business period resembles, in some of its features, his mining experience in Esmeralda, his letters to Webster being not unlike those to Orion in that former day. They are much oftener gentle, considerate, even apologetic, but they are occasionally terse, arbitrary, and profane. It required effort for him to be entirely calm in his business correspondence. A criticism of one of Webster's assistants will serve as an example of his less quiet method:

> Charley, your proof-reader, is an idiot; and not only an idiot, but blind; and not only blind, but partly dead.

Of course, one must regard many of Mark Twain's business aspects humorously. To consider them otherwise is to place him in a false light altogether. He wore himself out with his anxieties and irritations; but that even he, in the midst of his furies, saw the humor of it all is sufficiently evidenced by the form of his savage phrasing. There were few things that did not amuse him, and certainly nothing amused more, or oftener, than himself.

It is proper to add a detail in evidence of a business soundness which he sometimes manifested. He had observed the methods of Bliss and Osgood, and had drawn his conclusions. In the beginning of the *Huck Finn* canvass he wrote Webster:

> Keep it diligently in mind that we don't issue till we have made a *big sale*.
>
> Get at your canvassing early and drive it with all your might, with an intent and purpose of issuing on the 10th or 15th of next December (the best time in the year to tumble a big pile into the trade); but if we haven't 40,000 subscriptions we simply postpone publication till we've got them. It is a plain, simple policy, and would have saved both of my last books if it had been followed. [That is to say, *The Prince and the Pauper* and the Mississippi book, neither of which had sold up to his expectations on the initial canvass.]

CL

FARM PICTURES

GERHARDT returned from Paris that summer, after three years of study, a qualified sculptor. He was prepared to take commissions, and came to Elmira to model a bust of his benefactor. The work was finished after four or five weeks of hard effort and pronounced admirable; but Gerhardt, attempting to make a cast one morning, ruined it completely. The family gathered round the disaster, which to them seemed final, but the sculptor went immediately to work, and in an amazingly brief time executed a new bust even better than the first, an excellent piece of modeling and a fine likeness. It was decided that a cut of it should be used as a frontispiece for the new book, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.*

Clemens was at this time giving the final readings to the *Huck Finn* pages, a labor in which Mrs. Clemens and the children materially assisted. In the childish biography which Susy began of her father, a year later, she says:

> Ever since papa and mama were married papa has written his books and then taken them to mama in manuscript, and she has expergated[1] them. Papa read *Huckleberry Finn* to us in manuscript,[2] just before it came out, and then he would leave parts of it with mama to expergate, while he went off to the study to work, and sometimes Clara and I would be sitting with mama while she was looking the manuscript over, and I remember so

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[1] Susy's spelling is preserved.

[2] Probably meaning proof.

> well, with what pangs of regret we used to see her turn down the leaves of the pages, which meant that some delightfully terrible part must be scratched out. And I remember one part pertickularly which was perfectly fascinating it was so terrible, that Clara and I used to delight in and oh, with what despair we saw mama turn down the leaf on which it was written, we thought the book would almost be ruined without it. But we gradually came to think as mama did.

Commenting on this phase of *Huck's* evolution Mark Twain has since written:

> I remember the special case mentioned by Susy, and can see the group yet—two-thirds of it pleading for the life of the culprit sentence that was so fascinatingly dreadful, and the other third of it patiently explaining why the court could not grant the prayer of the pleaders; but I do not remember what the condemned phrase was. It had much company, and they all went to the gallows; but it is possible that that especially dreadful one which gave those little people so much delight was cunningly devised and put into the book for just that function, and not with any hope or expectation that it would get by the "expergator" alive. It is possible, for I had that custom.

Little Jean was probably too youthful yet to take part in that literary arbitration. She was four, and had more interest in cows. In some memoranda which her father kept of that period—the "Children's Book"—he says:

> She goes out to the barn with one of us every evening toward six o'clock, to look at the cows—which she adores—no weaker word can express her feeling for them. She sits rapt and contented while David milks the three, making a remark now and then—always about the cows. The time passes slowly and drearily for her attendant, but not for her. She could stand a week of it. When the milking is finished, and "Blanche," "Jean," and "the cross cow" are turned into the adjoining little cow-lot, we have to set Jean on a shed in that lot, and stay by her half an hour, till Eliza, the German nurse, comes to take

her to bed. The cows merely stand there, and do nothing; yet the mere sight of them is all-sufficient for Jean. She requires nothing more. The other evening, after contemplating them a long time, as they stood in the muddy muck chewing the cud, she said, with deep and reverent appreciation, "Ain't this a sweet little garden?"

Yesterday evening our cows (after being inspected and worshiped by Jean from the shed for an hour) wandered off down into the pasture and left her bereft. I thought I was going to get back home, now, but that was an error. Jean knew of some more cows in a field somewhere, and took my hand and led me thitherward. When we turned the corner and took the right-hand road, I saw that we should presently be out of range of call and sight; so I began to argue against continuing the expedition, and Jean began to argue in favor of it, she using English for light skirmishing and German for "business." I kept up my end with vigor, and demolished her arguments in detail, one after the other, till I judged I had her about cornered. She hesitated a moment, then answered up, sharply:

"Wir werden nichts mehr darüber sprechen!" (We won't talk any more about it.)

It nearly took my breath away, though I thought I might possibly have misunderstood. I said:

"Why, you little rascal! Was hast du gesagt?"

But she said the same words over again, and in the same decided way. I suppose I ought to have been outraged, but I wasn't; I was charmed.

His own note-books of that summer are as full as usual, but there are fewer literary ideas and more philosophies. There was an excitement, just then, about the trichina germ in pork, and one of his memoranda says:

I think we are only the microscopic trichina concealed in the blood of some vast creature's veins, and that it is that vast creature whom God concerns himself about and not us.

And there is another which says:

People, in trying to justify eternity, say we can put it in by learning all the knowledge acquired by the inhabitants of the

Susy Clara Jean

MRS. CLEMENS AND THE CHILDREN, HARTFORD, CONN., 1884

> myriads of stars. We sha'n't need that. We could use up two eternities in learning all that is to be learned about our own world, and the thousands of nations that have risen, and flourished, and vanished from it. Mathematics alone would occupy me eight million years.

He records an incident which he related more fully in a letter to Howells:

> Before I forget it I must tell you that Mrs. Clemens has said a bright thing. A drop-letter came to me asking me to lecture here for a church debt. I began to rage over the exceedingly cool wording of the request, when Mrs. Clemens said: "I think I know that church, and, if so, this preacher is a colored man; he doesn't know how to write a polished letter. How should he?"
>
> My manner changed so suddenly and so radically that Mrs. C. said: "I will give you a motto, and it will be useful to you if you will adopt it: 'Consider every man colored till he is proved white.'"
>
> It is dern good, I think.

One of the note-books contains these entries:

> Talking last night about home matters, I said, "I wish I had said to George when we were leaving home, 'Now, George, I wish you would take advantage of these three or four months' idle time while I am away—'"
>
> "To learn to let my matches alone," interrupted Livy. The very words I was going to use. Yet George had not been mentioned before, nor his peculiarities.
>
> Several years ago I said:
>
> "Suppose I should live to be ninety-two, and just as I was dying a messenger should enter and say—"
>
> "You are become Earl of Durham," interrupted Livy. The very words I was going to utter. Yet there had not been a word said about the earl, or any other person, nor had there been any conversation calculated to suggest any such subject.

CLI

MARK TWAIN MUGWUMPS

THE Republican Presidential nomination of James G. Blaine resulted in a political revolt such as the nation had not known. Blaine was immensely popular, but he had many enemies in his own party. There were strong suspicions of his being connected with doubtful financiering—enterprises, more or less sensitive to official influence, and while these scandals had become quieted a very large portion of the Republican constituency refused to believe them unjustified. What might be termed the intellectual element of Republicanism was against Blaine: George William Curtis, Charles Dudley Warner, James Russell Lowell, Henry Ward Beecher, Thomas Nast, the firm of Harper & Brothers, Joseph W. Hawley, Joseph Twichell, Mark Twain—in fact the majority of thinking men who held principle above party in their choice.

On the day of the Chicago nomination, Henry C. Robinson, Charles E. Perkins, Edward M. Bunce, F. G. Whitmore, and Samuel C. Dunham were collected with Mark Twain in his billiard-room, taking turns at the game and discussing the political situation, with George, the colored butler, at the telephone down-stairs to report the returns as they came in. As fast as the ballot was received at the political headquarters down-town, it was telephoned up to the house and George reported it through the speaking-tube.

The opposition to Blaine in the convention was so strong that no one of the assembled players seriously expected his nomination. What was their amazement, then, when about mid-afternoon George suddenly announced through the speaking-tube that Blaine was the nominee. The butts of the billiard cues came down on the floor with a bump, and for a moment the players were speechless. Then Henry Robinson said:

"It's hard luck to have to vote for that man."

Clemens looked at him under his heavy brows.

"But—we don't—*have* to vote for him," he said.

"Do you mean to say that you're *not* going to vote for him?"

"Yes, that is what I mean to say. I am not going to vote for him."

There was a general protest. Most of those assembled declared that when a party's representatives chose a man one must stand by him. They might choose unwisely, but the party support must be maintained. Clemens said:

"No party holds the privilege of dictating to me how I shall vote. If loyalty to party is a form of patriotism, I am no patriot. If there is any valuable difference between a monarchist and an American, it lies in the theory that the American can decide for himself what is patriotic and what isn't. I claim that difference. I am the only person in the sixty millions that is privileged to dictate my patriotism."

There was a good deal of talk back and forth, and, in the end, most of those there present remained loyal to Blaine. General Hawley and his paper stood by Blaine. Warner withdrew from his editorship of the *Courant* and remained neutral. Twichell stood with Clemens and came near losing his pulpit by it. Open letters were published in the newspapers about him. It was a campaign when politics divided neighbors, families, and congregations. If we except the Civil War period, there never had been a more rancorous political warfare than that waged between the parties of James G. Blaine and Grover Cleveland in 1884.

That Howells remained true to Blaine was a grief to Clemens. He had gone to the farm with Howells on his political conscience and had written fervent and imploring letters on the subject. As late as September 17th, he said:

> Somehow I can't seem to rest quiet under the idea of your voting for Blaine. I believe you said something about the country and the party. Certainly allegiance to these is well, but certainly a man's first duty is to his own conscience and honor; the party and country come second to that, and never first. I don't ask you to vote at all. I only urge you not to soil yourself by voting for Blaine. . . . Don't be offended; I mean no offense. I am not concerned about the rest of the nation, but—well, good-by. Yours ever, MARK.

Beyond his prayerful letters to Howells, Clemens did not greatly concern himself with politics on the farm, but, returning to Hartford, he went vigorously into the campaign, presided, as usual, at mass-meetings, and made political speeches which invited the laughter of both parties, and were universally quoted and printed without regard to the paper's convictions.

It was during one such speech as this that, in the course of his remarks, a band outside came marching by playing patriotic music so loudly as to drown his voice. He waited till the band got by, but by the time he was well under way again another band passed, and once more he was obliged to wait till the music died away in the distance. Then he said, quite serenely:

"You will find my speech, without the music, in the morning paper."

In introducing Carl Schurz at a great mugwump mass-meeting at Hartford, October 20, 1884, he remarked that he [Clemens] was the only legitimately elected officer, and was expected to read a long list of vice-presidents; but he had forgotten all about it, and he would ask all the gentlemen there, of whatever political complexion, to do him a great favor by acting as vice-presidents. Then he said:

> As far as my own political change of heart is concerned, I have not been convinced by any Democratic means. The opinion I hold of Mr. Blaine is due to the comments of the Republican press before the nomination. Not that they have said bitter or scandalous things, because Republican papers are above that, but the things they said did not seem to be complimentary, and seemed to me to imply editorial disapproval of Mr. Blaine and the belief that he was not qualified to be President of the United States.
>
> It is just a little indelicate for me to be here on this occasion before an assemblage of voters, for the reason that the ablest newspaper in Colorado—the ablest newspaper in the world—has recently nominated me for President. It is hardly fit for me to preside at a discussion of the brother candidate, but the best among us will do the most repulsive things the moment we are smitten with a Presidential madness. If I had realized that this canvass was to turn on the candidate's private character I would have started that Colorado paper sooner. I know the crimes that can be imputed and proved against me can be told on the fingers of your hands. This cannot be said of any other Presidential candidate in the field.

Inasmuch as the Blaine-Cleveland campaign was essentially a campaign of scurrility, this touch was loudly applauded.

Mark Twain voted for Grover Cleveland, though up to the very eve of election he was ready to support a Republican nominee in whom he had faith, preferably Edmunds, and he tried to inaugurate a movement by which Edmunds might be nominated as a surprise candidate and sweep the country.

It was probably Dr. Burchard's ill-advised utterance concerning the three alleged R's of Democracy, "Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion," that defeated Blaine, and by some strange, occult means Mark Twain's butler George got wind of this damning speech before it became news on the streets of Hartford. George had gone with his party, and had a considerable sum of money wagered on Blaine's election; but he knew it was likely to be very close, and he had an instant and deep conviction that these three fatal words and Blaine's failure to repudiate them meant the candidate's downfall. He immediately abandoned everything in the shape of household duties, and within the briefest possible time had changed enough money to make him safe, and leave him a good margin of winnings besides, in the event of Blaine's defeat. This was evening. A very little later the news of Blaine's blunder, announced from the opera-house stage, was like the explosion of a bomb. But it was no news to George, who went home rejoicing with his enemies.

CLII

PLATFORMING WITH CABLE

THE drain of many investments and the establishment of a publishing house had told heavily on Clemens's finances. It became desirable to earn a large sum of money with as much expedition as possible. Authors' readings had become popular, and Clemens had read in Philadelphia and Boston with satisfactory results. He now conceived the idea of a grand tour of authors as a commercial enterprise. He proposed to Aldrich, Howells, and Cable that he charter a private car for the purpose, and that with their own housekeeping arrangements, cooking, etc., they could go swinging around the circuit, reaping a golden harvest. He offered to be general manager of the expedition, the impresario as it were, and agreed to guarantee the others not less than seventy-five dollars a day apiece as their net return from the "circus," as he called it.

Howells and Aldrich liked well enough to consider it as an amusing prospect, but only Cable was willing to realize it. He had been scouring the country on his own account, and he was willing enough to join forces with Mark Twain.

Clemens detested platforming, but the idea of reading from his books or manuscript for some reason seemed less objectionable, and, as already stated, the need of much money had become important.

He arranged with J. B. Pond for the business side of the expedition, though in reality he was its proprietor. The private-car idea was given up, but he employed Cable at a salary of four hundred and fifty dollars a week and expenses, and he paid Pond a commission. Perhaps, without going any further, we may say that the tour was a financial success, and yielded a large return of the needed funds.

Clemens and Cable had a pleasant enough time, and had it not been for the absence from home and the disagreeableness of railway travel, there would have been little to regret. They were a curiously associated pair. Cable was orthodox in his religion, devoted to Sunday-school, Bible reading, and church affairs in general. Clemens—well, Clemens was different. On the first evening of their tour, when the latter was comfortably settled in bed with an entertaining book, Cable appeared with his Bible, and proceeded to read a chapter aloud. Clemens made no comment, and this went on for an evening or two more. Then he said:

"See here, Cable, we'll have to cut this part of the program out. You can read the Bible as much as you please so long as you don't read it to me."

Cable retired courteously. He had a keen sense of humor, and most things that Mark Twain did, whether he approved or not, amused him. Cable did not smoke, but he seemed always to prefer the smoking compartment when they traveled, to the more respectable portions of the car. One day Clemens said to him:

"Cable, why do you sit in here? You don't smoke, and you know I always smoke, and sometimes swear."

Cable said, "I know, Mark, I don't do these things, but I can't help admiring the way you do them."

When Sunday came it was Mark Twain's great happiness to stay in bed all day, resting after his week of labor; but Cable would rise, bright and chipper, dress himself in neat and suitable attire, and visit the various churches and Sunday-schools in town, usually making a brief address at each, being always invited to do so.

It seems worth while to include one of the Clemens-Cable programs here—a most satisfactory one. They varied it on occasion, and when they were two nights in a place changed it completely, but the program here given was the one they were likely to use after they had proved its worth:

PROGRAM

Richling's visit to Kate Riley

Geo. W. Cable

King Sollermun

Mark Twain

(*a*) Kate Riley and Ristofolo
(*b*) Narcisse in mourning for "Lady Byron"
(*c*) Mary's Night Ride

Geo. W. Cable

(*a*) Tragic Tale of the Fishwife
(*b*) A Trying Situation
(*c*) A Ghost Story

Mark Twain

At a Mark Twain memorial meeting (November 30, 1910), where the few who were left of his old companions told over quaint and tender memories, George Cable recalled their reading days together and told of Mark Twain's conscientious effort to do his best, to be worthy of himself, regardless of all other concerns. He told how when they had been traveling for a while Clemens seemed to realize that he was only giving the audience nonsense; making them laugh at trivialities which they would forget before they had left the entertainment hall. Cable said that up to that time he had supposed Clemens's chief thought was the entertainment of the moment, and that if the audience laughed he was satisfied. He told how he had sat in the wings, waiting his turn, and heard the tides of laughter gather and roll forward and break against the footlights, time and time again, and how he had believed his colleague to be glorying in that triumph. What was his surprise, then, on the way to the hotel in the carriage, when Clemens groaned and seemed writhing in spirit and said:

"Oh, Cable, I am demeaning myself. I am allowing myself to be a mere buffoon. It's ghastly. I can't endure it any longer."

Cable added that all that night and the next day Mark Twain devoted himself to the study and rehearsal of selections which were justified not only as humor, but as literature and art.

A good many interesting and amusing things would happen on such a tour. Many of these are entirely forgotten, of course, but of others certain memoranda have been preserved. Grover Cleveland had been elected when they set out on their travels, but was still holding his position in Albany as Governor of New York. When they reached Albany Cable and Clemens decided to call on him. They drove to the Capitol and were shown into the Governor's private office. Cleveland made them welcome, and, after greetings, said to Clemens:

"Mr. Clemens, I was a fellow-citizen of yours in Buffalo a good many months some years ago, but you never called on me then. How do you explain this?"

Clemens said: "Oh, that is very simple to answer, your Excellency. In Buffalo you were a sheriff. I kept away from the sheriff as much as possible, but you're Governor now, and on the way to the Presidency. It's worth while coming to see you."

Clemens meantime had been resting, half sitting, on the corner of the Executive desk. He leaned back a little, and suddenly about a dozen young men opened various doors, filed in and stood at attention, as if waiting for orders.

No one spoke for a moment; then the Governor said to this collection of attendants:

"You are dismissed, young gentlemen. Your services are not required. Mr. Clemens is sitting on the bells."

In Buffalo, when Clemens appeared on the stage, he leisurely considered the audience for a moment; then he said:

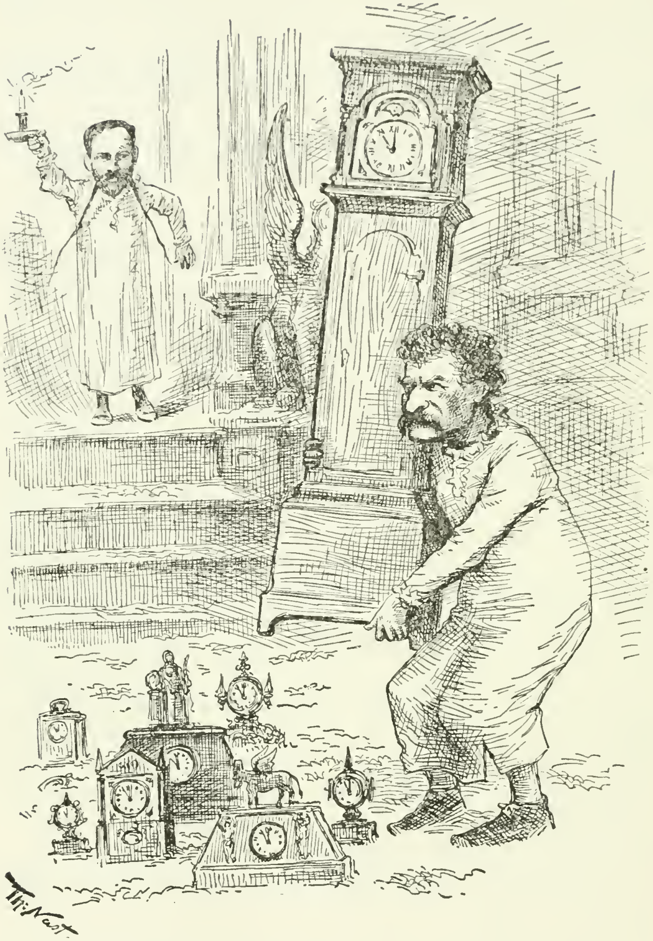
"I miss a good many faces. They have gone—gone to the tomb, to the gallows, or to the White House. All of us are entitled to at least one of these distinctions, and it behooves us to be wise and prepare for all."

On Thanksgiving Eve the readers were in Morristown, New Jersey, where they were entertained by Thomas Nast. The cartoonist prepared a quiet supper for them and they remained overnight in the Nast home. They were to leave next morning by an early train, and Mrs. Nast had agreed to see that they were up in due season. When she woke next morning there seemed a strange silence in the house and she grew suspicious. Going to the servants' room, she found them sleeping soundly. The alarm-clock in the back hall had stopped at about the hour the guests retired. The studio clock was also found stopped; in fact, every timepiece on the premises had retired from business. Clemens had found that the clocks interfered with his getting to sleep, and he had quieted them regardless of early trains and reading engagements. On being accused of duplicity he said:

"Well, those clocks were all overworked, anyway. They will feel much better for a night's rest."

A few days later Nast sent him a caricature drawing—a picture which showed Mark Twain getting rid of the offending clocks.

At Christmas-time they took a fortnight's holiday and Clemens went home to Hartford. A surprise was awaiting him there. Mrs. Clemens had made an adaptation of



MARK TWAIN AND THE CLOCKS. BY TH: NAST

The Prince and the Pauper play, and the children of the neighborhood had prepared a presentation of it for his special delectation. He knew, on his arrival home, that something mysterious was in progress, for certain rooms were forbidden him; but he had no inkling of their plan until just before the performance—when he was led across the grounds to George Warner's home, into the large room there where it was to be given, and placed in a seat directly in front of the stage.

Gerhardt had painted the drop-curtain, and assisted in the general construction of scenery and effects. The result was really imposing; but presently, when the curtain rose and the guest of honor realized what it was all about, and what they had undertaken for his pleasure, he was deeply moved and supremely gratified.

There was but one hitch in the performance. There is a place where the Prince says, "Fathers be alike, mayhap; mine hath not a doll's temper."

This was Susy's part, and as she said it the audience did not fail to remember its literal appropriateness. There was a moment's silence, then a titter, followed by a roar of laughter, in which everybody but the little actors joined. They did not see the humor and were disturbed and grieved. Curiously enough, Mrs Clemens herself, in arranging and casting the play, had not considered the possibility of this effect. The parts were all daintily played. The children wore their assumed personalities as if native to them. Daisy Warner played the part of Tom Canty, Clara Clemens was Lady Jane Grey.

It was only the beginning of *The Prince and the Pauper* productions. The play was repeated, Clemens assisting, adding to the parts, and himself playing the rôle of Miles Hendon. In her childish biography Susy says:

> Papa had only three days to learn the part in, but still we were all sure that he could do it. The scene that he acted in was

the scene between Miles Hendon and the Prince, the "Prithee, pour the water" scene. I was the Prince and papa and I rehearsed together two or three times a day for the three days before the appointed evening. Papa acted his part beautifully, and he added to the scene, making it a good deal longer. He was inexpressibly funny, with his great slouch hat and gait—oh such a gait! Papa made the Miles Hendon scene a splendid success and every one was delighted with the scene, and papa too. We had great fun with our "Prince and Pauper," and I think we none of us shall forget how immensely funny papa was in it. He certainly could have been an actor as well as an author.

The holidays over, Cable and Clemens were off on the circuit again. At Rochester an incident happened which led to the writing of one of Mark Twain's important books, *A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court.* Clemens and Cable had wandered into a book-store for the purpose of finding something to read. Pulling over some volumes on one of the tables, Clemens happened to pick up a little green, cloth-bound book, and after looking at the title turned the pages rather curiously and with increasing interest.

"Cable," he said, "do you know anything about this book, the Arthurian legends of Sir Thomas Malory, *Morte Arthure?*"

Cable answered: "Mark, that is one of the most beautiful books in the world. Let me buy it for you. You will love it more than any book you ever read."

So Clemens came to know the old chronicler's version of the rare Round Table legends, and from that first acquaintance with them to the last days of his life seldom let the book go far from him. He read and reread those quaint, stately tales and reverenced their beauty, while fairly reveling in the absurdities of that ancient day. Sir Ector's lament he regarded as one of the most simply beautiful pieces of writing in the English tongue, and some of the combats and quests as the most ridiculous absurdities in romance. Presently he conceived the idea of linking that day, with its customs, costumes, and abuses, with the progress of the present, or carrying back into that age of magicians and armor and superstition and cruelties a brisk American of progressive ideas who would institute reforms. His note-book began to be filled with memoranda of situations and possibilities for the tale he had in mind. These were vague, unformed fancies as yet, and it would be a long time before the story would become a fact. This was the first entry:

> Dream of being a knight-errant in armor in the Middle Ages. Have the notions and habits, though, of the present day mixed with the necessities of that. No pockets in the armor. No way to manage certain requirements of nature. Can't scratch. Cold in the head and can't blow. Can't get a handkerchief; can't use iron sleeve; iron gets red-hot in the sun; leaks in the rain; gets white with frost and freezes me solid in winter; makes disagreeable clatter when I enter church. Can't dress or undress myself. Always getting struck by lightning. Fall down and can't get up.

Twenty-one years later, discussing the genesis of the story, he said:

"As I read those quaint and curious old legends I suppose I naturally contrasted those days with ours, and it made me curious to fancy what might be the picturesque result if we could dump the nineteenth century down into the sixth century and observe the consequences."

The reading tour continued during the first two months of the new year and carried them as far west as Chicago. They read in Hannibal and Keokuk, and Clemens spent a day in the latter place with his mother, now living with Orion, brisk and active for her years and with her old-time force of character. Mark Twain, arranging for her Keokuk residence, had written:

> Ma wants to board with you, and pay her board. She will pay you $20 a month (she wouldn't pay a cent more in heaven; she is obstinate on this point), and as long as she remains with you and is content I will add $25 a month to the sum Perkins already sends you.

Jane Clemens attended the Keokuk reading, and later, at home, when her children asked her if she could still dance, she rose, and at eighty-one tripped as lightly as a girl. It was the last time that Mark Twain ever saw his mother in the health and vigor which had been always so much a part of her personality.

Clemens saw another relative on that trip; in St. Louis, James Lampton, the original of Colonel Sellers, called.

> He was become old and white-headed, but he entered to me in the same old breezy way of his earlier life, and he was all there, yet—not a detail wanting: the happy light in his eye, the abounding hope in his heart, the persuasive tongue, the miracle-breeding imagination—they were all there; and before I could turn around he was polishing up his Aladdin's lamp and flashing the secret riches of the world before me. I said to myself: "I did not overdraw him by a shade, I set him down as he was; and he is the same man to-day. Cable will recognize him."

Clemens opened the door into Cable's room and allowed the golden dream-talk to float in. It was of a "small venture" which the caller had undertaken through his son.

"Only a little thing—a mere trifle—a bagatelle. I suppose there's a couple of millions in it, possibly three, but not more, I think; still, for a boy, you know—"

It was the same old Cousin Jim. Later, when he had royally accepted some tickets for the reading and bowed his exit, Cable put his head in at the door.

"That was Colonel Sellers," he said.

CLIII

HUCK FINN COMES INTO HIS OWN

IN the December *Century* (1884) appeared a chapter from *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, "The Grangerford-Shepherdson Feud," a piece of writing which Edmund Clarence Stedman, Brander Matthews, and others promptly ranked as among Mark Twain's very best; when this was followed, in the January number, by "King Sollermun," a chapter which in its way delighted quite as many readers, the success of the new book was accounted certain.[1]

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn was officially published in England and America in December, 1884, but the book was not in the canvassers' hands for delivery until February. By this time the orders were approximately for forty thousand copies, a number which had increased to fifty thousand a few weeks later. Webster's first publication venture was in the nature of a triumph. Clemens wrote to him March 16th:

"Your news is splendid. *Huck* certainly is a success."

He felt that he had demonstrated his capacity as a general director and Webster had proved his efficiency as an executive. He had no further need of an outside publisher.

The story of *Huck Finn* will probably stand as the best of Mark Twain's purely fictional writings. A sequel to *Tom Sawyer*, it is greater than its predecessor; greater artistically, though perhaps with less immediate interest for the juvenile reader. In fact, the books are so different that they are not to be compared—wherein lies the success of the later one. Sequels are dangerous things when the story is continuous, but in *Huckleberry Finn* the story is a new one, wholly different in environment, atmosphere, purpose, character, everything. The tale of Huck and Nigger Jim drifting down the mighty river on a raft, cross-secting the various primitive aspects of human existence, constitutes one of the most impressive examples of picaresque fiction in any language. It has been ranked greater than *Gil Blas*, greater even than *Don Quixote;* certainly it is more convincing, more human, than either of these tales. Robert Louis Stevenson once wrote, "It is a book I have read four times, and am quite ready to begin again to-morrow."

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[1] Stedman, writing to Clemens of this instalment, said: "To my mind it is not only the most finished and condensed thing you have done, but as dramatic and powerful an episode as I know in modern literature."

It is by no means a flawless book, though its defects are trivial enough. The illusion of Huck as narrator fails the least bit here and there; the "four dialects" are not always maintained; the occasional touch of broad burlesque detracts from the tale's reality. We are inclined to resent this. We never wish to feel that Huck is anything *but* a real character. We want him always the Huck who was willing to go to hell if necessary, rather than sacrifice Nigger Jim; the Huck who watched the river through long nights, and, without caring to explain why, felt his soul go out to the sunrise.

Two or three days and nights went by; I reckon I might say they swum by, they slid along so quiet and smooth and lovely. Here is the way we put in the time. It was a monstrous big river down there—sometimes a mile and a half wide; we run nights and laid up and hid daytimes; soon as the night was most gone we stopped navigating and tied up—nearly always in the dead water under a towhead; and then cut young cottonwoods and willows and hid the raft with them. Then we set out the lines. Next we slid into the river and had a swim, so as to freshen up and cool off; then we set down on the sandy bottom where the water was about knee deep, and watched the daylight come. Not a sound anywheres—perfectly still—just like the whole world was asleep, only sometimes the bullfrogs a-cluttering, maybe. The first thing to see, *looking* away over the water, was a kind of dull line—that was the woods on t'other side, you couldn't make nothing else out; then a pale place in the sky; then more paleness, spreading around; then the river softened up, away off, and warn't black anymore, but gray; you could see little dark spots drifting along, ever so far away—trading scows, and such things; and long black streaks—rafts; sometimes you could hear a sweep screaking; or jumbled up voices, it was so still, and sounds come so far; and by-and-by you could see a streak on the water which you know by the look of the streak that there's a snag there in a swift current which breaks on it and makes that streak look that way; and you see the mist curl up off the water, and the east reddens up, and the river, and you make out a log-cabin in the edge of the woods, away on the bank on t'other side of the river, being a woodyard, likely, and piled by them cheats so you can throw a dog through it anywheres; then the nice breeze springs up, and comes fanning you over there, so cool and fresh, and sweet to smell, on account of the woods and the flowers. . . . And next you've got the full day, and everything smiling in the sun, and the song-birds just going it!

This is the Huck we want, and this is the Huck we usually have, and that the world has long been thankful for.

Take the story as a whole, it is a succession of startling and unique pictures. The cabin in the swamp which Huck and his father used together in their weird, ghastly relationship; the night adventure with Jim on the wrecked steamboat; Huck's night among the towheads; the Grangerford-Shepherdson battle; the killing of Boggs—to name a few of the many vivid presentations—these are of no time or literary fashion and will never lose their flavor nor their freshness so long as humanity itself does not change. The terse, unadorned Grangerford-Shepherdson episode—built out of the Darnell-Watson feuds[1]—is simply classic in its vivid casualness, and the same may be said of almost every incident on that long river-drift; but this is the strength, the very essence of picaresque narrative. It is the way things happen in reality; and the quiet, unexcited frame of mind in which Huck is prompted to set them down would seem to be the last word in literary art. To Huck, apparently, the killing of Boggs and Colonel Sherburn's defiance of the mob are of about the same historical importance as any other incidents of the day's travel. When Colonel Sherburn threw his shotgun across his arm and bade the crowd disperse Huck says:

> The crowd washed back sudden, and then broke all apart and went tearing off every which way, and Buck Harkness he heeled it after them, looking tolerable cheap. I could a staid if I'd a wanted to, but I didn't want to.
>
> I went to the circus, and loafed around the back side till the watchman went by, and then dived in under the tent.

That is all. No reflections, no hysterics; a murder and a mob dispersed, all without a single moral comment. And when the Shepherdsons had got done killing the Grangerfords, and Huck had tugged the two bodies ashore and covered Buck Grangerford's face with a handkerchief, crying a little because Buck had been good to him, he spent no time in sentimental reflection or sermonizing, but promptly hunted up Jim and the raft and sat down to a meal of corn-dodgers, buttermilk, pork and cabbage, and greens:

> There ain't nothing in the world so good, when it is cooked right; and while I eat my supper we talked, and had a good

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[1] See *Life on the Mississippi*, chap. xxvi. Mark Twain himself, as a cub pilot, came near witnessing the battle he describes.

time. I was powerful glad to get away from the feuds, and so was Jim to get away from the swamp. We said there warn't no home like a raft, after all. Other places do seem so cramped up and smothery, but a raft don't; you feel mighty free and easy and comfortable on a raft.

It was Huck Finn's morality that caused the book to be excluded from the Concord Library, and from other libraries here and there at a later day. The orthodox mental attitude of certain directors of juvenile literature could not condone Huck's looseness in the matter of statement and property rights, and in spite of New England traditions Massachusetts librarians did not take any too kindly to his uttered principle that, after thinking it over and taking due thought on the deadly sin of abolition, he had decided that he'd go to hell rather than give Jim over to slavery. Poor vagrant Ben Blankenship, hiding his runaway negro in an Illinois swamp, could not dream that his humanity would one day supply the moral episode of an immortal book.

Able critics have declared that the psychology of Huck Finn is the book's large feature: Huck's moral point of view—the struggle between his heart and his conscience concerning the sin of Jim's concealment, and his final decision of self-sacrifice. Time may show that as an epic of the river, the picture of a vanished day, it will rank even greater. The problems of conscience we have always with us, but periods once passed are gone forever. Certainly Huck's loyalty to that lovely soul Nigger Jim was beautiful, though after all it may not have been so hard for Huck, who could be loyal to anything. Huck was loyal to his father, loyal to Tom Sawyer of course, loyal even to those two river tramps and frauds, the King and the Duke, for whom he lied prodigiously, only weakening when a new and lovelier loyalty came into view—loyalty to Mary Wilks.

The King and the Duke, by the way, are not elsewhere matched in fiction. The Duke was patterned after a journeyman-printer Clemens had known in Virginia City, but the King was created out of refuse from the whole human family—"all tears and flapdoodle," the very ultimate of disrepute and hypocrisy—so perfect a specimen that one must admire, almost love, him. "Hain't we all the fools in town on our side? and ain't that a big enough majority in any town?" he asks in a critical moment—a remark which stamps him as a philosopher of classic rank. We are full of pity at last when this pair of rapscallions ride out of the history on a rail, and feel some of Huck's inclusive loyalty and all the sorrowful truth of his comment: "Human beings *can* be awful cruel to one another."

The "poor old king" Huck calls him, and confesses how he felt "ornery and humble and to blame, somehow," for the old scamp's misfortunes. "A person's conscience ain't got no sense," he says, and Huck is never more real to us, or more lovable, than in that moment. Huck is what he is because, being made so, he cannot well be otherwise. He is a boy throughout—such a boy as Mark Twain had known and in some degree had been. One may pettily pick a flaw here and there in the tale's construction if so minded, but the moral character of Huck himself is not open to criticism. And indeed any criticism of this the greatest of Mark Twain's tales of modern life would be as the mere scratching of the granite of an imperishable structure. *Huck Finn* is a monument that no puny pecking will destroy. It is built of indestructible blocks of human nature; and if the blocks do not always fit, and the ornaments do not always agree, we need not fear. Time will blur the incongruities and moss over the mistakes. The edifice will grow more beautiful with the years.

CLIV

THE MEMOIRS OF GENERAL GRANT

THE success of *Huck Finn*, though sufficiently important in itself, prepared the way for a publishing venture by the side of which it dwindled to small proportions. One night (it was early in November, 1884), when Cable and Clemens had finished a reading at Chickering Hall, Clemens, coming out into the wet blackness, happened to hear Richard Watson Gilder's voice say to some unseen companion:

"Do you know General Grant has actually determined to write his memoirs and publish them. He has said so to-day, in so many words."

Of course Clemens was immediately interested. It was the thing he had proposed to Grant some three years previously, during his call that day with Howells concerning the Toronto consulship.

With Mrs. Clemens, he promptly overtook Gilder and accompanied him to his house, where they discussed the matter in its various particulars. Gilder said that the Century Editors had endeavored to get Grant to contribute to their war series, but that not until his financial disaster, as a member of the firm of Grant & Ward, had he been willing to consider the matter. He said that Grant now welcomed the idea of contributing three papers to the series, and that the promised payment of five hundred dollars each for these articles had gladdened his heart and relieved him of immediate anxiety.[1]

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[1] Somewhat later the Century Company, voluntarily, added liberally to this sum.

Gilder added that General Grant seemed now determined to continue his work until he had completed a book, though this at present was only a prospect.

Clemens was in the habit of calling on Grant, now and then, to smoke a cigar with him, and he dropped in next morning to find out just how far the book idea had developed, and what were the plans of publication. He found the General and his son, Colonel Fred Grant, discussing some memoranda, which turned out to be a proposition from the Century Company for the book publication of his memoirs. Clemens asked to be allowed to look over the proposed terms, and when he had done so he said:

"General, it is clear that the Century people do not realize the importance—the commercial magnitude of your book. It is not strange that this is true, for they are comparatively new publishers and have had little or no experience with books of this class. The terms they propose indicate that they expect to sell five, possibly ten thousand copies. A book from your hand, telling the story of your life and battles, should sell not less than a quarter of a million, perhaps twice that sum. It should be sold only by subscription, and you are entitled to double the royalty here proposed. I do not believe it is to your interest to conclude this contract without careful thought and investigation. Write to the American Publishing Company at Hartford and see what they will do for you."

But Grant demurred. He said that, while no arrangements had been made with the Century Company, he thought it only fair and right that they should have the book on reasonable terms; certainly on terms no greater than he could obtain elsewhere. He said that, all things being equal, the book ought to go to the man who had first suggested it to him.

Clemens spoke up: "General, if that is so, it belongs to *me*."

Grant did not understand until Clemens recalled to him how he had urged him, in that former time, to write his memoirs; had pleaded with him, agreeing to superintend the book's publication. Then he said:

"General, I am publishing my own book, and by the time yours is ready it is quite possible that I shall have the best equipped subscription establishment in the country. If you will place your book with my firm—and I feel that I have at least an equal right in the consideration—I will pay you twenty per cent. of the list price, or, if you prefer, I will give you seventy per cent. of the net returns and I will pay all office expenses out of my thirty per cent."

General Grant was really grieved at this proposal. It seemed to him that here was a man who was offering to bankrupt himself out of pure philanthropy—a thing not to be permitted. He intimated that he had asked the Century Company president, Roswell Smith, a careful-headed business man, if he thought his book would pay as well as Sherman's, which the Scribners had published at a profit to Sherman of twenty-five thousand dollars, and that Smith had been unwilling to guarantee that amount to the author.[1]

[1] Mark Twain's note-book, under date of March, 1885, contains this memorandum:

"Roswell Smith said to me: 'I'm glad you got the book, Mr. Clemens; glad there was somebody with courage enough to take it, under the circumstances. What do you think the General wanted to require of me?'

" 'What?'

" 'He wanted me to insure a sale of twenty-five thousand sets of his book. I wouldn't risk such a guarantee on any book that was ever published.' "

Yet Roswell Smith, not so many years later, had so far enlarged his views of subscription publishing that he fearlessly and successfully invested a million dollars or more in a dictionary, regardless of the fact that the market was already thought to be supplied.

Clemens said:

"General, I have my check-book with me. I will draw you a check now for twenty-five thousand dollars for the first volume of your memoirs, and will add a like amount for each volume you may write as an advance royalty payment, and your royalties will continue right along when this amount has been reached."

Colonel Fred Grant now joined in urging that matters be delayed, at least until more careful inquiry concerning the possibilities of publishing could be made.

Clemens left then, and set out on his trip with Cable, turning the whole matter over to Webster and Colonel Fred for settlement. Meantime, the word that General Grant was writing his memoirs got into the newspapers and various publishing propositions came to him. In the end the General sent over to Philadelphia for his old friend, George W. Childs, and laid the whole matter before him. Childs said later it was plain that General Grant, on the score of friendship, if for no other reason, distinctly wished to give the book to Mark Twain. It seemed not to be a question of how much money he would make, but of personal feeling entirely. Webster's complete success with *Huck Finn* being now demonstrated, Colonel Fred Grant agreed that he believed Clemens and Webster could handle the book as profitably as anybody; and after investigation Childs was of the same opinion. The decision was that the firm of Charles L. Webster & Co. should have the book, and arrangements for drawing the contract were made.

General Grant, however, was still somewhat uneasy as to the terms. He thought he was taking an unfair advantage in receiving so large a proportion of the profits. He wrote to Clemens, asking him which of his two propositions—the twenty per cent. gross royalty or the seventy per cent. of the net profit—would be the best all around. Clemens sent Webster to tell him that he believed the simplest, as well as the most profitable for the author, would be the twenty per cent. arrangement. Whereupon Grant replied that he would take the alternative; as in that case, if the book were a failure, and there were no profits, Clemens would not be obliged to pay him anything. He could not consent to the thought of receiving twenty per cent. on a book published at a loss.

Meantime, Grant had developed a serious illness. The humiliation of his business failure had undermined his health. The papers announced his malady as cancer of the tongue. In a memorandum which Clemens made, February 26, 1885, he states that on the 21st he called at the Grant home, 3 East 66th Street, and was astonished to see how thin and weak the General looked. He was astonished because the newspaper, in a second report, had said the threatening symptoms had disappeared, that the cancer alarm was a false one.

> I took for granted the report, and said I had been glad to see that news. He smiled and said, "Yes—if it had only been true."
>
> One of the physicians was present, and he startled me by saying the General's condition was the opposite of encouraging.
>
> Then the talk drifted to business, and the General presently said: "I mean you shall have the book—I have about made up my mind to that—but I wish to write to Mr. Roswell Smith first, and tell him I have so decided. I think this is due him."
>
> From the beginning the General has shown a fine delicacy toward those people—a delicacy which was native to the character of the man who put into the Appomattox terms of surrender the words, "Officers may retain their side-arms," to save General Lee the humiliation of giving up his sword. [Note-book.]

The physician present was Dr. Douglas, and upon Clemens assuming that the General's trouble was probably due to smoking, also that it was a warning to those who smoked to excess, himself included, Dr. Douglas said that General Grant's affliction could not be attributed altogether to smoking, but far more to his distress of mind, his year-long depression of spirit, the grief of his financial disaster. Dr. Douglas's remark started General Grant upon the subject of his connection with Ward, which he discussed with great freedom and apparent relief of mind. Never at any time did he betray any resentment toward Ward, but characterized him as one might an offending child. He spoke as a man who has been deeply wronged and humiliated and betrayed, but without a venomous expression or one with revengeful nature. Clemens confessed in his notes that all the time he himself was "inwardly boiling—scalping Ward—flaying him alive—breaking him on the wheel—pounding him to a jelly."

While he was talking Colonel Grant said:

"Father is letting you see that the Grant family are a pack of fools, Mr. Clemens."

The General objected to this statement. He said that the facts could be produced which would show that when Ward laid siege to a man he was pretty certain to turn out to be a fool; as much of a fool as any of the Grant family. He said that nobody could call the president of the Erie Railroad a fool, yet Ward had beguiled him of eight hundred thousand dollars, robbed him of every cent of it.

He cited another man that no one could call a fool who had invested in Ward to the extent of half a million. He went on to recall many such cases. He told of one man who had come to the office on the eve of departure for Europe and handed Ward a check for fifty thousand dollars, saying:

"I have no use for it at present. See what you can do with it for me." By and by this investor, returning from Europe, dropped in and said:

"Well, did anything happen?"

Ward indifferently turned to his private ledger, consulted it, then drew a check for two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and handed it over, with the casual remark:

"Well, yes, something happened; not much yet—a little too soon."

The man stared at the check, then thrust it back into Ward's hand. "That's all right. It's plenty good enough for me. Set that hen again," and left the place.

Of course Ward made no investments. His was the first playing on a colossal scale of the now worn-out "get rich quick" confidence game. Such dividends as were made came out of the principal. Ward was the Napoleon of that game, whether he invented it or not. Clemens agreed that, as far as himself or any of his relatives were concerned, they would undoubtedly have trusted Ward.

Colonel Grant followed him to the door when he left, and told him that the physicians feared his father might not live more than a few weeks longer, but that meantime he had been writing steadily, and that the first volume was complete and fully half the second. Three days later the formal contract was closed, and Webster & Co. promptly advanced General Grant ten thousand dollars for imminent demands, a welcome arrangement, for Grant's debts and expenses were many, and his available resources restricted to the *Century* payments for his articles.

Immediately the office of Webster & Co. was warm with affairs. Reporters were running hot-foot for news of the great contract by which Mark Twain was to publish the life of General Grant. No publishing enterprise of such vast moment had ever been undertaken, and no publishing event, before or since, ever received the amount of newspaper comment. The names of General Grant and Mark Twain associated would command columns, whatever the event, and that Mark Twain was to become the publisher of Grant's own story of his battles was of unprecedented importance.

The partners were sufficiently occupied. Estimates and prices for vast quantities of paper were considered, all available presses were contracted for, binderies were pledged exclusively for the Grant book. Clemens was boiling over with plans and suggestions for distribution. Webster was half wild with the tumult of the great campaign. Applications for agencies poured in.

In those days there were general subscription agencies which divided the country into districts, and the heads of these agencies Webster summoned to New York and laid down the law to them concerning the new book. It was not a time for small dealings, and Webster rose to the occasion. By the time these men returned to their homes they had practically pledged themselves to a quarter of a million sets of the *Grant Memoirs*, and this estimate they believed to be conservative.

Webster now moved into larger and more pretentious quarters. He took a store-room at 42 East 14th Street, Union Square, and surrounded himself with a capable force of assistants. He had become, all at once, the most conspicuous publisher in the world.

CLV

DAYS WITH A DYING HERO

THE contract for the publication of the Grant Life was officially closed February 27, 1885. Five days later, on the last day and at the last hour of President Arthur's administration, and of the Congress then sitting, a bill was passed placing Grant as full General, with full pay, on the retired army list. The bill providing for this somewhat tardy acknowledgment was rushed through at the last moment, and it is said that the Congressional clock was set back so that this enactment might become a law before the administration changed.

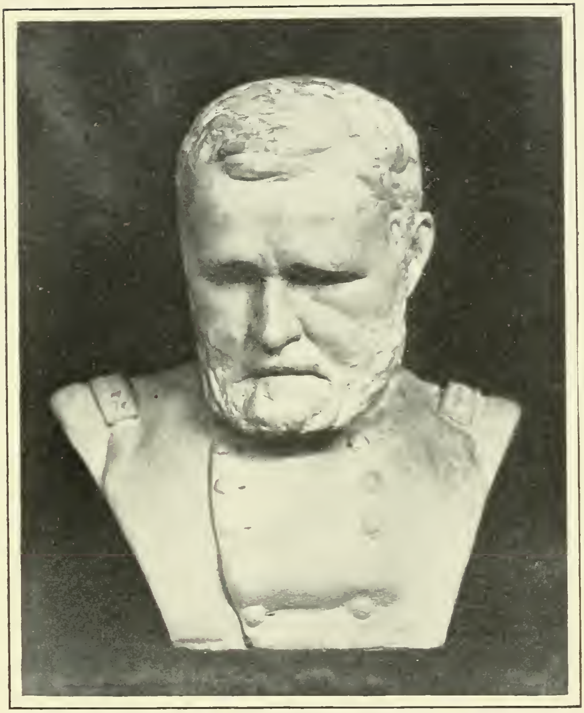
Clemens was with General Grant when the news of this action was read to him. Grant had greatly desired such recognition, and it meant more to him than to any one present, yet Clemens in his notes records:

> Every face there betrayed strong excitement and emotion except one—General Grant's. He read the telegram, but not a shade or suggestion of a change exhibited itself in his iron countenance. The volume of his emotion was greater than all the other emotions there present combined, but he was able to suppress all expression of it and make no sign.

Grant's calmness, endurance, and consideration during these final days astonished even those most familiar with his noble character. One night Gerhardt came into the library at Hartford with the announcement that he wished to show his patron a small bust he had been making in clay of General Grant. Clemens did not show much interest in the prospect, but when the work was uncovered he became enthusiastic. He declared it was the first likeness he had ever seen of General Grant that approached reality. He agreed that the Grant family ought to see it, and that he would take Gerhardt with him next day in order that he might be within reach in case they had any suggestions. They went to New York next morning, and called at the Grant home during the afternoon.

From the note-book:

Friday, March 20, 1885. Gerhardt and I arrived at General Grant's about 2.30 P.M. and I asked if the family would look at a small clay bust of the General which Gerhardt had made from a photograph. Colonel Fred and Jesse were absent to receive their sister, Mrs. Sartoris, who would arrive from Europe about 4.30; but the three Mrs. Grants examined the work and expressed strong approval of it, and also great gratification that Mr. Gerhardt had undertaken it. Mrs. Jesse Grant had lately dreamed that she was inquiring where the maker of my bust could be found (she had seen a picture of it in *Huck Finn*, which was published four weeks ago), for she wanted the same artist to make one of General Grant. The ladies examined the bust critically and pointed out defects, while Gerhardt made the necessary corrections. Presently Mrs. General Grant suggested that Gerhardt step in and look at the General. I had been in there talking with the General, but had never thought of asking him to let a stranger come in. So Gerhardt went in with the ladies and me, and the inspection and cross-fire began: "There, I was sure his nose was so and so," and, "I was sure his forehead was so and so," and, "Don't you think his head is so and so?" And so everybody walked around and about the old hero, who lay half reclining in his easy chair, but well muffled up, and submitting to all this as serenely as if he were used to being served so. One marked feature of General Grant's character is his exceeding gentleness, goodness, sweetness. Every time I have been in his presence—lately and formerly—my mind was drawn to that feature. I wonder it has not been more spoken of.



THE GERHARDT BUST OF GENERAL GRANT

Presently he said, let Gerhardt bring in his clay and work there, if Gerhardt would not mind his reclining attitude. Of course we were glad. A table for the bust was moved up in front of him; the ladies left the room; I got a book; Gerhardt went to work; and for an hour there was perfect stillness, and for the first time during the day the General got a good, sound, peaceful nap. General Badeau came in, and probably interrupted that nap. He spoke out as strongly as the others concerning the great excellence of the likeness. He had some sheets of MS. in his hand, and said, "I've been reading what you wrote this morning, General, and it is of the utmost value; it solves a riddle that has puzzled men's brains all these years and makes the thing clear and rational." I asked what the puzzle was, and he said, "It was why Grant did not immediately lay siege to Vicksburg after capturing Port Hudson" (at least that is my recollection, now toward midnight, of General Badeau's answer).

The little bust of Grant which Gerhardt worked on that day was widely reproduced in terra-cotta, and is still regarded by many as the most nearly correct likeness of Grant. The original is in possession of the family.

General Grant worked industriously on his book. He had a superb memory and worked rapidly. Webster & Co. offered to supply him with a stenographer, and this proved a great relief. Sometimes he dictated ten thousand words at a sitting. It was reported at the time, and it has been stated since, that Grant did not write the *Memoirs* himself, but only made notes, which were expanded by others. But this is not true. General Grant wrote or dictated every word of the story himself, then had the manuscript read aloud to him and made his own revisions. He wrote against time, for he knew that his disease was fatal. Fortunately the lease of life granted him was longer than he had hoped for, though the last chapters were written when he could no longer speak, and when weakness and suffering made the labor a heavy one indeed; but he never flinched or faltered, never at any time suggested that the work be finished by another hand.

Early in April General Grant's condition became very alarming, and on the night of the 3d it was believed he could not live until morning. But he was not yet ready to surrender. He rallied and renewed his task; feebly at first, but more perseveringly as each day seemed to bring a little added strength, or perhaps it was only resolution. Now and then he appeared depressed as to the quality of his product. Once Colonel Fred Grant suggested to Clemens that if he could encourage the General a little it might be worth while. Clemens had felt always such a reverence and awe for the great soldier that he had never dreamed of complimenting his literature.

"I was as much surprised as Columbus's cook could have been to learn that Columbus wanted his opinion as to how Columbus was doing his navigating."

He did not hesitate to give it, however, and with a clear conscience. Grant wrote as he had fought; with a simple, straightforward dignity, with a style that is not a style at all but the very absence of it, and therefore the best of all literary methods. It happened that Clemens had been comparing some of Grant's chapters with *Cæsar's Commentaries*, and was able to say, in all sincerity, that the same high merits distinguished both books: clarity of statement, directness, simplicity, manifest truthfulness, fairness and justice toward friend and foe alike, soldierly candor and frankness, and soldierly avoidance of flowery speech.

"I placed the two books side by side upon the same level," he said, "and I still think that they belong there. I learned afterward that General Grant was pleased with this verdict. It shows that he was just a man, just a human being, just an author."

Within two months after the agents had gone to work canvassing for the *Grant Memoirs*—which is to say by the 1st of May, 1885—orders for sixty thousand sets had been received, and on that day Mark Twain, in his note-book, made a memorandum estimate of the number of books that the country would require, figuring the grand total at three hundred thousand sets of two volumes each. Then he says:

> If these chickens should really hatch according to my account, General Grant's royalties will amount to $420,000, and will make the largest single check ever paid an author in the world's history. Up to the present time the largest one ever paid was to Macaulay on his *History of England*, £20,000. If I pay the General in silver coin at $12 per pound it will weigh seventeen tons.

Certainly this has a flavor in it of Colonel Sellers, but we shall see by and by in how far this calculation was justified.

Grant found the society of Mark Twain cheering and comforting, and Clemens held himself in readiness to go to the dying man at call. On the 26th of May he makes this memorandum:

> It is curious and dreadful to sit up in this way and talk cheerful nonsense to General Grant, and he under sentence of death with that cancer. He says he has made the book too large by 200 pages—not a bad fault. A short time ago we were afraid we would lack 400 of being enough.
>
> To-day talked with General Grant about his and my first great Missouri campaign in 1861. He surprised an empty camp near Florida, Missouri, on Salt River, which I had been occupying a day or two before. How near he came to playing the devil with his future publisher!

Of course Clemens would amuse the old commander with the tale of his soldiering, how his company had been chased through the brush and mud by the very announcement that Grant was coming. Some word of this got to the *Century* editors, who immediately proposed that Mark Twain contribute to the magazine War Series the story of his share in the Rebellion, and particularly of his war relations with General Grant. So the "Private History of a Campaign that Failed" was prepared as Mark Twain's side-light on the history of the Rebellion; and if it was not important history it was at least amusing, and the telling of that tale in Mark Twain's inimitable fashion must have gone far toward making cheerful those last sad days of his ancient enemy.

During one of their talks General Grant spoke of the question as to whether he or Sherman had originated the idea of the march to the sea. Grant said:

"Neither of us originated the idea of that march. The enemy did it."

Reports were circulated of estrangements between General Grant and the Century Company, and between Mark Twain and the Century Company, as a result of the book decision. Certain newspapers exploited and magnified these rumors—some went so far as to accuse Mark Twain of duplicity, and to charge him with seeking to obtain a vast fortune for himself at the expense of General Grant and his family. All of which was the merest nonsense. The Century Company, Webster & Co., General Grant, and Mark Twain individually, were all working harmoniously, and nothing but the most cordial relations and understanding prevailed. As to the charge of unfair dealing on the part of Mark Twain, this was too absurd, even then, to attract more than momentary attention. Webster & Co., somewhat later in the year, gave to the press a clear statement of their publishing arrangement, though more particularly denying the report that General Grant had been unable to complete his work.

CLVI

THE CLOSE OF A GREAT CAREER

THE Clemens household did not go to Elmira that year until the 27th of June. Meantime General Grant had been taken to Mount McGregor, near the Adirondacks. The day after Clemens reached Elmira there came a summons saying that the General had asked to see him. He went immediately, and remained several days. The resolute old commander was very feeble by this time. It was three months since he had been believed to be dying, yet he was still alive, still at work, though he could no longer speak. He was adding, here and there, a finishing touch to his manuscript, writing with effort on small slips of paper containing but a few words each. His conversation was carried on in the same way. Mark Twain brought back a little package of those precious slips, and some of them are still preserved. The writing is perfectly legible, and shows no indication of a trembling hand.

On one of these slips is written:

> There is much more that I could do if I was a well man. I do not write quite as clearly as I could if well. If I could read it over myself many little matters of anecdote and incident would suggest themselves to me.

On another:

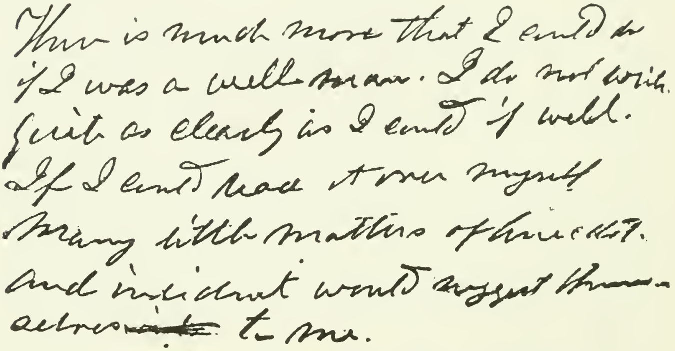
> Have you seen any portion of the second volume? It is up to the end, or nearly so. As much more work as I have done

to-day will finish it. I have worked faster than if I had been well. I have used my three boys and a stenographer.

And on still another:

> If I could have two weeks of strength I could improve it very much. As I am, however, it will have to go about as it is, with verifications by the boys and by suggestions which will enable me to make a point clear here and there.

Certainly no campaign was ever conducted with a braver heart. As long as his fingers could hold a pencil he continued at his task. Once he asked if any estimate could now be made of what portion would accrue to his family from the publication. Clemens's prompt reply, that more than one hundred thousand sets had been sold, and that already the amount of his share, secured by safe bonds, exceeded one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, seemed to give him deep comfort. Clemens told him that the country was as yet not one-third canvassed, and that without doubt there turns would be twice as much more by the end of the year. Grant made no further inquiry, and probably never again mentioned the subject to any one.



There is much more that I could do
if I was a well man. I do not write
quite as clearly as I could if well.
If I could read it over myself
many little matters of anecdote
and incident would suggest them-
selves to me.

FACSIMILE OF GENERAL GRANT'S LAST WRITING

When Clemens left, General Grant was sitting, fully dressed, with a shawl about his shoulders, pencil and paper beside him. It was a picture that would never fade from the memory. In a later memorandum he says:

> I then believed he would live several months. He was still adding little perfecting details to his book, and preface, among other things. He was entirely through a few days later. Since then the lack of any strong interest to employ his mind has enabled the tedious weariness to kill him. I think his book kept him alive several months. He was a very great man and superlatively good.

This note was made July 23, 1885, at 10 A.M., on receipt of the news that General Grant was dead. To Henry Ward Beecher, Clemens wrote:

> One day he put his pencil aside and said there was nothing more to do. If I had been there I could have foretold the shock that struck the world three days later.

It can be truly said that all the nation mourned. General Grant had no enemies, political or sectional, in those last days. The old soldier battling with a deadly disease, yet bravely completing his task, was a figure at once so pathetic and so noble that no breath of animosity remained to utter a single word that was not kind.

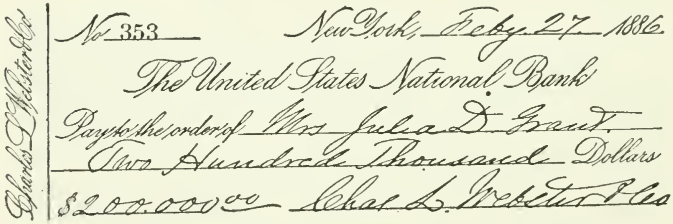
Memorial services were held from one end of the country to the other. Those who had followed him in peace or war, those who had fought beside him or against him, alike paid tribute to his memory. Twichell, from the mountains of Vermont, wrote:

> I suppose I have said to Harmony forty times since I got up here, "How I wish I could see Mark!" My notion is that between us we could get ourselves expressed. I have never known any one who could help me read my own thoughts in such a case as you can and *have* done many a time, dear old fellow.
>
> I'd give more to sit on a log with you in the woods this after-

noon, while we twined a wreath together for Launcelot's grave, than to hear any conceivable eulogy of him pronounced by mortal lips.

The death of Grant so largely and so suddenly augmented the orders for his *Memoirs* that it seemed impossible to get the first volume printed in time for the delivery, which had been promised for December 1st. J. J. Little had the contract of manufacture, and every available press and bindery was running double time to complete the vast contract.

In the end more than three hundred thousand sets of two volumes each were sold, and between four hundred and twenty and four hundred and fifty thousand dollars was paid to Mrs. Grant. The first check of two hundred thousand dollars, drawn February 27, 1886, remains the largest single royalty check in history. Mark Twain's prophecy had been almost exactly verified.



Charles L. Webster & Co.

No 353 New York, Feby 27 1886.

The United States National Bank

Pay to the order of Mrs Julia D. Grant

Two Hundred Thousand Dollars

$200.000.00 Chas L. Webster Pres

FACSIMILE OF THE FIRST ROYALTY CHECK PAID BY CHARLES L. WEBSTER & CO., ON THE GRANT MEMOIR. ORIGINAL NOW OWNED BY THE PLAYERS CLUB, N. Y.

CLVII

MINOR MATTERS OF A GREAT YEAR

THE Grant episode, so important in all its phases, naturally overshadowed other events of 1885. Mark Twain was so deeply absorbed in this great publishing enterprise that he wasted little thought or energy in other directions.

Yet there are a few minor things that it seems worth while to remember. Howells has told something of the Authors' Reading given for the Longfellow Memorial, an entertainment managed by George Parsons Lathrop, though Howells justly claims the glory of having fixed the price of admission at five dollars. Then he recalls a pleasing anecdote of Charles Eliot Norton, who introduced the attractions.

> Norton presided, and when it came Clemens's turn to read he introduced him with such exquisite praises as he best knew how to give, but before he closed he fell a prey to one of those lapses of tact which are the peculiar peril of people of the greatest tact. He was reminded of Darwin's delight in Mark Twain, and how when he came from his long day's exhausting study, and sank into bed at midnight, he took up a volume of Mark Twain, whose books he always kept on a table beside him, and whatever had been his tormenting problem, or excess of toil, he felt secure of a good night's rest from it. A sort of blank ensued which Clemens filled in the only possible way. He said he should always be glad he had contributed to the repose of that great man, to whom science owed so much, and then without waiting for the joy in every breast to burst forth, he began to read.

Howells tells of Mark Twain's triumph on this occasion, and in a letter at the time he wrote: " You simply straddled down to the footlights and took that house up in the hollow of your hand and tickled it."

Howells adds that the show netted seventeen hundred dollars. This was early in May.

Of literary work, beyond the war paper, the "Private History of a Campaign that Failed" (published December, 1885), Clemens appears to have done very little. His thoughts were far too busy with plans for furthering the sale of the great military *Memoir* to follow literary ventures of his own. At one time he was impelled to dictate an autobiography—Grant's difficulties in his dying hour suggesting this—and he arranged with Redpath, who was no longer a lecture agent and understood stenography, to co-operate with him in the work. He dictated a few chapters, but he was otherwise too much occupied to continue. Also, he was unused to dictation, and found it hard and the result unsatisfactory.

Two open communications from Mark Twain that year deserve to be remembered. One of these, unsigned, was published in the *Century Magazine*, and expressed the need for a "universal tinker," the man who can accept a job in a large household or in a community as master of all trades, with sufficient knowledge of each to be ready to undertake whatever repairs are likely to be required in the ordinary household, such as—"to put in window-panes, mend gas leaks, jack-plane the edges of doors that won't shut, keep the waste-pipe and other water-pipe joints, glue and otherwise repair havoc done in furniture, etc." The letter was signed X. Y. Z., and it brought replies from various parts of the world. None of the applicants seemed universally qualified, but in Kansas City a business was founded on the idea, adopting "The Universal Tinker" as its firm name.

The other letter mentioned was written to the *Christian*

Union, inspired by a tale entitled, "What Ought We to Have Done?" It was a tale concerning the government of children; especially concerning the government of one child—John Junior—a child who, as it would appear from the tale, had a habit of running things pretty much to his own notion. The performance of John Junior, and of his parents in trying to manage him, stirred Mark Twain considerably—it being "enough to make a body's blood boil," as he confesses—and it impelled him to set down surreptitiously his impressions of what would have happened to John Junior as a member of the Clemens household. He did not dare to show the communication to Mrs. Clemens before he sent it, for he knew pretty well what its fate would be in that case. So he took chances and printed it without her knowledge. The letter was published July 16, 1885. It is too long to be included entire, but it is too illuminating to be altogether omitted. After relating, in considerable detail, Mrs. Clemens's method of dealing with an unruly child—the gentleness yet firmness of her discipline—he concludes:

> The mother of my children adores them—there is no milder term for it—and they worship her; they even worship anything which the touch of her hand has made sacred. They know her for the best and truest friend they have ever had, or ever shall have; they know her for one who never did them a wrong, and cannot do them a wrong; who never told them a lie, nor the shadow of one; who never deceived them by even an ambiguous gesture; who never gave them an unreasonable command, nor ever contented herself with anything short of a perfect obedience; who has always treated them as politely and considerately as she would the best and oldest in the land, and has always required of them gentle speech and courteous conduct toward all, of whatsoever degree with whom they chanced to come in contact; they know her for one whose promise, whether of reward or punishment, is gold, and always worth its face, to the uttermost farthing. In a word, they know her, and I know her, for

> the best and dearest mother that lives—and by a long, long way the wisest. . . .
>
> In all my life I have never made a single reference to my wife in print before, as far as I can remember, except once in the dedication of a book; and so, after these fifteen years of silence, perhaps I may unseal my lips this one time without impropriety or indelicacy. I will institute one other novelty: I will send this manuscript to the press without her knowledge and without asking her to edit it. This will save it from getting edited into the stove.

Susy's biography refers to this incident at considerable length. She states that her father had misgivings after he had sent it to the *Christian Union*, and that he tried to recall the manuscript, but found it too late. She sets down some comments of her own on her mother's government, then tells us of the appearance of the article:

> When the *Christian Union* reached the farm and papa's article in it, all ready and waiting to be read to mama, papa hadn't the courage to show it to her (for he knew she wouldn't like it at all) at first, and he didn't, but he might have let it go and never let her see it; but finally he gave his consent to her seeing it, and told Clara and I we could take it to her, which we did with tardiness, and we all stood around mama while she read it, all wondering what she would say and think about it.
>
> She was too much surprised (and pleased privately too) to say much at first; but, as we all expected, publicly (or rather when she remembered that this article was to be read by every one that took the *Christian Union*) she was rather shocked and a little displeased.

Susy goes on to tell that the article provoked a number of letters, most of them pleasant ones, but some of them of quite another sort. One of the latter fell into her mother's hands, after which there was general regret that the article had been printed, and the subject was no longer discussed at Quarry Farm.

Susy's biography is a unique record. It was a sort of combined memoir and journal, charming in its innocent frankness and childish insight. She used to keep it under her pillow, and after she was asleep the parents would steal it out and find a tender amusement and pathos in its quaint entries. It is a faithful record so far as it goes, and the period it covers is an important one; for it presents a picture of Mark Twain in the fullness of his manhood, in the golden hour of his fortune. Susy's beginning has a special value here:[1]

> We are a very happy family! We consist of papa, mama, Jean, Clara and me. It is papa I am writing about, and I shall have no trouble in not knowing what to say about him, as he is a very striking character. Papa's appearance has been described many times, but very incorrectly; he has beautiful curly grey hair, not any too thick, or any too long, just right; a Roman nose, which greatly improves the beauty of his features, kind blue eyes, and a small mustache, he has a wonderfully shaped head, and profile, he has a very good figure in short he is an extraordinarily fine looking man. All his features are perfect, except that he hasn't extraordinary teeth. His complexion is very fair, and he doesn't ware a beard.
>
> He is a very good man, and a very funny one; he has got a temper but we all of us have in this family. He is the loveliest man I ever saw, or ever hope to see, and oh so absent-minded!

That this is a fair statement of the Clemens home, and the truest picture of Mark Twain at fifty that has been preserved, cannot be doubted. His hair was iron-gray, not entirely white at this time, the auburn tints everywhere mingled with the shining white that later would mantle it like a silver crown. He did not look young for his years, but he was still young, always young—indestructibly young in spirit and bodily vigor. Susy tells how that summer he blew soap-bubbles for the children, filling the bubbles with tobacco smoke; how he would play with the cats, and come clear down from his study on the hill to see how "Sour Mash," then a kitten, was getting along; also how he wrote a poem for Jean's donkey, Cadichon (which they made Kiditchin). She quotes the poem:

---

[1] Susy's spelling and punctuation are preserved.

KIDITCHIN

O du lieb' Kiditchin
Du bist ganz bewitchin,
    Waw— — — –he!

In summer days Kiditchin
Thou'rt dear from nose to britchin
    Waw— — — –he!

No dought thoult get a switchin
When for mischief thou'rt itchin'
    Waw— — — –he!

But when you're good Kiditchin
You shall feast in James's kitchin
    Waw— — — –he!

O now lift up thy song—
Thy noble note prolong—
Thou living Chinese gong!
    Waw— –he! waw— –he waw
    Sweetest donkey man ever saw.

Clemens undertook to ride Kiditchin one day, to show the children how it should be done, but Kiditchin resented this interference and promptly flung him over her head. He thought she might have been listening to the poem he had written of her.

Susy's discovery that the secret of her biography was known is shown by the next entry, and the touch of severity in it was probably not entirely unconscious:

> Papa said the other day, "I am a mugwump and a mugwump is pure from the marrow out." (Papa knows that I am writing this biography of him, and he said this for it.) He doesn't like to go to church at all, why I never understood, until just now. He told us the other day that he couldn't bear to hear anyone talk but himself, but that he could listen to himself talk for hours without getting tired, of course he said this in joke, but I've no doubt it was founded on truth.

Susy's picture of life at Quarry Farm at this period is realistic and valuable—too valuable to be spared from this biography:

> There are eleven cats at the farm here now. Papa's favorite is a little tortoise-shell kitten he has named "Sour Mash," and a little spotted one "Fannie." It is very pretty to see what papa calls the cat procession; it was formed in this way. Old Minnie-cat headed, (the mother of all the cats) next to her came aunt Susie, then Clara on the donkey, accompanied by a pile of cats, then papa and Jean hand in hand and a pile of cats brought up in the rear, mama and I made up the audience.
>
> Our varius occupations are as follows. Papa rises about ½ past 7 in the morning, breakfasts at eight, writes, plays tennis with Clara and me and tries to make the donkey go, in the morning; does varius things in P.M., and in the evening plays tennis with Clara and me and amuses Jean and the donkey.
>
> Mama rises about ¼ to eight, breakfasts at eight, teaches Jean German reading from 9–10; reads German with me from 10–11. Then she reads studdies or visits with aunt Susie for a while, and then she reads to Clara and I till lunch time things connected with English history (for we hope to go to England next summer) while we sew. Then we have lunch. She studdies for about half an hour or visits with aunt Susie, then reads to us an hour or more, then studdies writes reads and rests till supper time. After supper she sits out on the porch and works till eight o'clock, from eight o'clock to bedtime she plays whist with

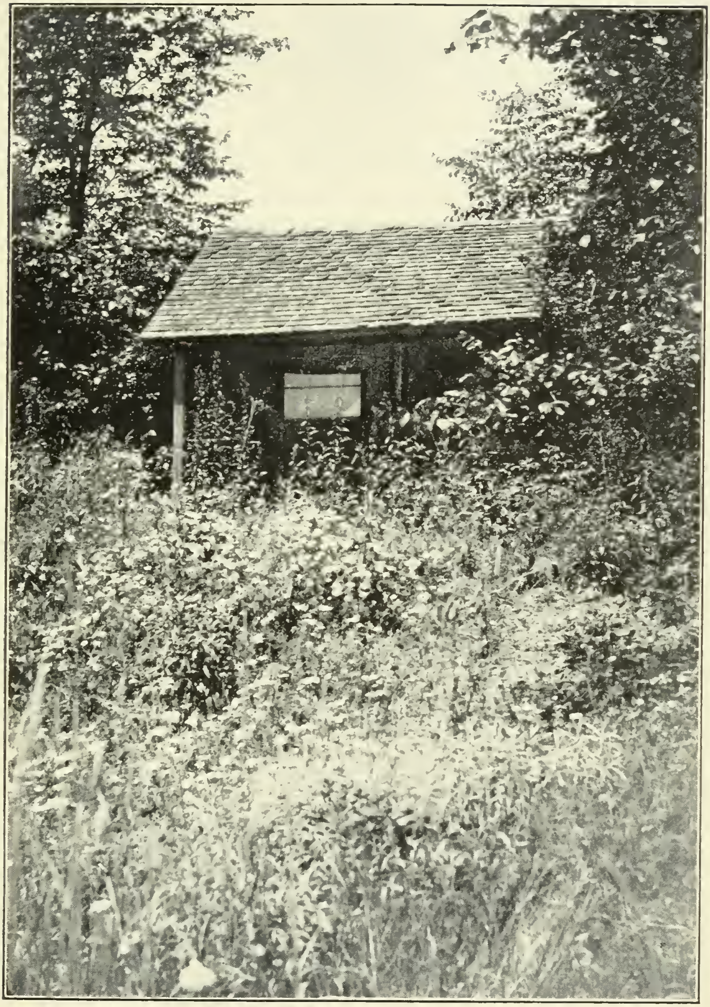
papa and after she has retired she reads and studdies German for a while.

Clara and I do most everything from practicing to donkey riding and playing tag. While Jean's time is spent in asking mama what she can have to eat.

It is impossible, at this distance, to convey all that the farm meant to the children during the summers of their infancy and childhood and girlhood which they spent there. It was the paradise, the dreamland they looked forward to during all the rest of the year. Through the long, happy months there they grew strong and brown, and drank deeply of the joy of life. Their cousins Julia, Jervis, and Ida Langdon ranged about their own ages and were almost their daily companions. Their games were mainly of the out-of-doors; the woods and meadows and hillside pastures were their playground. Susy was thirteen when she began her diary; a gentle, thoughtful, romantic child. One afternoon she discovered a wonderful tangle of vines and bushes between the study and the sunset—a rare hiding-place. She ran breathlessly to her aunt:

"Can I have it? Can Clara and I have it all for our own?"

The petition was granted, of course, and the place was named Helen's Bower, for they were reading *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and the name appealed to Susy's poetic fancy. Then Mrs. Clemens conceived the idea of building a house for the children just beyond the bower. It was a complete little cottage when finished, with a porch and with furnishings contributed by friends and members of the family. There was a stove—a tiny affair, but practical—dishes, table, chairs, shelves, and a broom. The little house was named Ellerslie, out of Grace Aguilar's *Days of Robert Bruce*, and became one of the children's most beloved possessions. But alas for Helen's Bower! A workman was sent to clear away the debris



ELLERSLIE

after the builders, and being a practical man, he cut away Helen's Bower—destroyed it utterly. Susy first discovered the vandalism, and came rushing to the house in a torrent of sorrow. For her the joy of life seemed ended, and it was long before she could be comforted. But Ellerslie in time satisfied her hunger for retreat, became, in fact, the nucleus around which the children's summer happiness centered.

To their elders the farm remained always the quiet haven. Once to Orion's wife Clemens wrote:

> This is a superb Sunday. . . .
>
> The city in the valley is purple with shade, as seen from up here at the study. The Cranes are reading and loafing in the canvas-curtained summer-house, fifty yards away, on a higher (the highest) point; the cats are loafing over at Ellerslie, which is the children's estate and dwelling-house in their own private grounds (by deed from Susie Crane), a hundred yards from the study, among the clover and young oaks and willows. Livy is down at the house, but I shall now go and bring her up to the Cranes to help us occupy the lounges and hammocks, whence a great panorama of distant hills and valley and city is seeable. The children have gone on a lark through the neighboring hills and woods, Susie and Clara horseback and Jean driving a buggy, with the coachman for comrade and assistant at need. It is a perfect day indeed.

The ending of each year's summer brought only regret. Clemens would never take away all his things. He had an old superstition that to leave some article insured return. Mrs. Clemens also left something—her heart's content. The children went around bidding various objects good-by and kissed the gates of Ellerslie to.

CLVIII

MARK TWAIN AT FIFTY

MARK TWAIN'S fiftieth birthday was one of the pleasantly observed events of that year. There was no special celebration, but friends sent kindly messages, and *The Critic*, then conducted by Jeannette and Joseph Gilder, made a feature of it. Miss Gilder wrote to Oliver Wendell Holmes and invited some verses, which with his never-failing kindliness he sent, though in his accompanying note he said:

"I had twenty-three letters spread out on my table for answering, all marked immediate, when your note came."

Dr. Holmes's stanzas are full of his gentle spirit:

TO MARK TWAIN

(*On his fiftieth birthday*)

Ah, Clemens, when I saw thee last,
  We both of us were younger;
How fondly mumbling o'er the past
  Is Memory's toothless hunger!

So fifty years have fled, they say,
  Since first you took to drinking;
I mean in Nature's milky way—
  Of course no ill I'm thinking.

But while on life's uneven road
  Your track you've been pursuing,
What fountains from your wit have flowed—
  What drinks you have been brewing!

I know whence all your magic came,
  Your secret I've discovered,
The source that fed your inward flame,
  The dreams that round you hovered.

Before you learned to bite or munch,
  Still kicking in your cradle,
The Muses mixed a bowl of punch
  And Hebe seized the ladle.

Dear babe, whose fiftieth year to-day
  Your ripe half-century rounded,
Your books the precious draught betray
  The laughing Nine compounded.

So mixed the sweet, the sharp, the strong,
  Each finds its faults amended,
The virtues that to each belong
  In happiest union blended.

And what the flavor can surpass
  Of sugar, spirit, lemons?
So while one health fills every glass—
  Mark Twain for Baby Clemens!

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

Frank R. Stockton, Charles Dudley Warner, and Joel Chandler Harris sent pleasing letters. Warner said:

> You may think it an easy thing to be fifty years old, but you will find it's not so easy to stay there, and your next fifty years will slip away much faster than those just accomplished.

Many wrote letters privately, of course, and Andrew Lang, like Holmes, sent a poem that has a special charm.

FOR MARK TWAIN

To brave Mark Twain, across the sea,
The years have brought his jubilee.
  One hears it, half in pain,
That fifty years have passed and gone
Since danced the merry star that shone
  Above the babe Mark Twain.

We turn his pages and we see
The Mississippi flowing free;
  We turn again and grin
O'er all Tom Sawyer did and planned
With him of the ensanguined hand,
  With Huckleberry Finn!

Spirit of Mirth, whose chime of bells
Shakes on his cap, and sweetly swells
  Across the Atlantic main,
Grant that Mark's laughter never die,
That men through many a century
  May chuckle o'er Mark Twain!

Assuredly Mark Twain was made happy by these attentions; to Dr. Holmes he wrote:

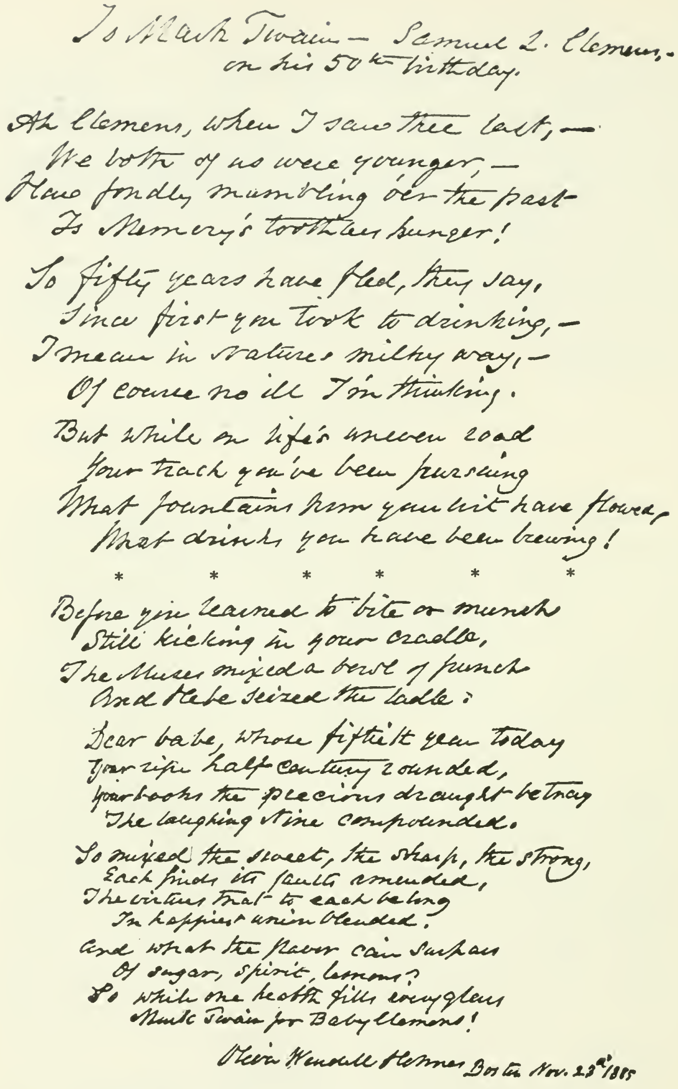
DEAR DR. HOLMES,—I shall never be able to tell you the half of how proud you have made me. If I could you would say you were nearly paid for the trouble you took. And then the family: If I could convey the electrical surprise and gratitude and exaltation of the wife and the children last night, when they happened upon that *Critic* where I had, with artful artlessness, spread it open and retired out of view to see what would happen —well, it was great and fine and beautiful to see, and made me feel as the victor feels when the shouting hosts march by; and if you also could have seen it you would have said the account was squared. For I have brought them up in your company, as in the company of a warm and friendly and beneficent but far-distant sun; and so, for you to do this thing was for the sun to send down out of the skies the miracle of a special ray and transfigure me before their faces. I knew what that poem would be to them; I knew it would raise me up to remote and shining heights in their eyes, to very fellowship with the chambered Nautilus itself, and that from that fellowship they could never more dissociate me while they should live; and so I made sure to be by when the surprise should come.

Charles Dudley Warner is charmed with the poem for its own felicitous sake; and so indeed am I, but more because it has drawn the sting of my fiftieth year; taken away the pain of it, the grief of it, the somehow *shame* of it, and made me glad and proud it happened.

With reverence and affection,
Sincerely yours,
S. L. CLEMENS.

So Samuel Clemens had reached the half-century mark; reached it in what seemed the fullness of success from every viewpoint. If he was not yet the foremost American man of letters, he was at least the most widely known—he sat upon the highest mountain-top. Furthermore, it seemed to him that fortune was showering her gifts into his lap. His unfortunate investments were now only as the necessary experiments that had led him to larger successes. As a publisher, he was already the most conspicuous in the world, and he contemplated still larger ventures: a type-setting machine patent, in which he had invested, and now largely controlled, he regarded as the chief invention of the age, absolutely certain to yield incalculable wealth. His connection with the Grant family had associated him with an enterprise looking to the building of a railway from Constantinople to the Persian Gulf. Charles A. Dana, of the *Sun*, had put him in the way of obtaining for publication the life of the Pope, Leo XIII., officially authorized by the Pope himself, and this he regarded as a certain fortune.

Now that the tide had turned he felt no hesitancy in



To Mark Twain — Samuel L. Clemens. —
on his 50th birthday.

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How fondly mumbling o'er the past
Is Memory's toothless hunger!

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* * * * * *

Before you learned to bite or munch
Still kicking in your cradle,
The Muses mixed a bowl of punch
And Hebe seized the ladle:

Dear babe, whose fiftieth year today
Your ripe half century rounded,
Your books the precious draught betray
The laughing Nine compounded.

So mixed the sweet, the sharp, the strong,
Each finds its faults amended,
The virtues that to each belong
In happiest union blended.

And what the flavor can surpass
Of sugar, spirit, lemons?
So while one health fills every glass
Mark Twain for Baby Clemens!

Oliver Wendell Holmes Boston Nov. 23d 1885

FACSIMILE OF DR. HOLMES'S POEM TO MARK TWAIN
(One stanza omitted)

MARK TWAIN AT 50

reckoning a fortune from almost any venture. The Grant book, even on the liberal terms allowed to the author, would yield a net profit of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars to its publishers. *Huck Finn* would yield fifty thousand dollars more. The sales of his other books had considerably increased. Certainly, at fifty, Mark Twain's fortunes were at flood-tide; buoyant and jubilant, he was floating on the topmost wave. If there were under-currents and undertow they were down somewhere out of sight. If there were breakers ahead, they were too far distant to be heard. So sure was he of the triumphant consummation of every venture that to a friend at his home one night he said:

"I am frightened at the proportions of my prosperity. It seems to me that whatever I touch turns to gold."

CLIX

THE LIFE OF THE POPE

AS Mark Twain in the earlier days of his marriage had temporarily put aside authorship to join in a newspaper venture, so now again literature had dropped into the background, had become an avocation, while financial interests prevailed. There were two chief ventures—the business of Charles L. Webster & Co. and the promotion of the Paige type-setting machine. They were closely identified in fortunes, so closely that in time the very existence of each depended upon the success of the other; yet they were quite distinct, and must be so treated in this story.

The success of the Grant Life had given the Webster business an immense prestige. It was no longer necessary to seek desirable features for publication. They came uninvited. Other war generals preparing their memoirs naturally hoped to appear with their great commander. *McClellan's Own Story* was arranged for without difficulty. *A Genesis of the Civil War*, by Gen. Samuel Wylie Crawford, was offered and accepted. General Sheridan's *Memoirs* were in preparation, and negotiations with Webster & Co. for their appearance were not delayed. Probably neither Webster nor Clemens believed that the sale of any of these books would approach those of the Grant Life, but they expected them to be large, for the Grant book had stimulated the public taste for war literature, and anything bearing the stamp of personal battle experience was considered literary legal-tender.

Moreover, these features, and even the Grant book itself, seemed likely to dwindle in importance by the side of *The Life of Pope Leo XIII.*, who in his old and enfeebled age had consented to the preparation of a memoir, to be published with his sanction and blessing.[1] Clemens and Webster—every one, in fact, who heard of the project—united in the belief that no book, with the exception of the Holy Scripture itself or the Koran, would have a wider acceptance than the biography of the Pope. It was agreed by good judges—and they included Howells and Twichell and even the shrewd general agents throughout the country—that every good Catholic would regard such a book not only as desirable, but as absolutely necessary to his salvation. Howells, recalling Clemens's emotions of this time, writes:

> He had no words in which to paint the magnificence of the project or to forecast its colossal success. It would have a currency bounded only by the number of Catholics in Christendom. It would be translated into every language which was anywhere written or printed; it would be circulated literally in every country of the globe.

The formal contract for this great undertaking was signed in Rome in April, 1886, and Webster immediately prepared to go over to consult with his Holiness in person as to certain details, also, no doubt, for the newspaper advertising which must result from such an interview.

It was decided to carry a handsome present to the Pope in the form of a specially made edition of the Grant *Memoirs* in a rich casket, and it was Clemens's idea that the binding of the book should be solid gold—this to be done by Tiffany at an estimated cost of about three thousand dollars. In the end, however, the binding was not gold, but the handsomest that could be designed of less precious and more appropriate materials.

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[1] By Bernard O'Reilly, D.D., LL.D. "Written with the Encouragement, Approbation, and Blessings of His Holiness the Pope."

Webster sailed toward the end of June, and was warmly received and highly honored in Rome. The great figures of the Grant success had astonished Europe even more than America, where spectacular achievements were more common. That any single publication should pay a profit to author and publisher of six hundred thousand dollars was a thing which belonged with the wonders of Aladdin's garden. It was natural, therefore, that Webster, who had rubbed the magic lamp with this result, who was Mark Twain's partner, and who had now traveled across the seas to confer with the Pope himself, should be received with royal honors. In letters written at the time, Webster relates how he found it necessary to have an imposing carriage and a footman to maintain the dignity of his mission, and how, after various impressive formalities, he was granted a private audience, a very special honor indeed. Webster's letter gives us a picture of his Holiness which is worth preserving.

> We[1] found ourselves in a room perhaps twenty-five by thirty-five feet; the furniture was gilt, upholstered in light-red silk, and the side-walls were hung with the same material. Against the wall by which we entered and in the middle space was a large gilt throne chair, upholstered in red plush, and upon it sat a man bowed with age; his hair was silvery white and as pure as the driven snow. His head was partly covered with a white skull-cap; he was dressed in a long white cassock which reached to his feet, which rested upon a red-plush cushion and were inclosed in red embroidered slippers with a design of a cross. A golden chain was about his neck and suspended by it in his lap was a gold cross set in precious stones. Upon a finger of his right hand was a gold ring with an emerald setting nearly an

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[1] Mrs. Webster, who, the reader will remember, was Annie Moffett, a daughter of Pamela Clemens, was included in the invitation to the Presence Chamber.

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inch in diameter. His countenance was smiling, and beamed with benevolence. His face at once impressed us as that of a noble, pure man who could not do otherwise than good.

This was the Pope of Rome, and as we advanced, making the three genuflexions prescribed by etiquette, he smiled benignly upon us. We advanced and, kneeling at his feet, kissed the seal upon his ring. He took us each by the hand repeatedly during the audience and made us perfectly at our ease.

They remained as much as half an hour in the Presence; and the Pope conversed on a variety of subjects, including the business failure of General Grant, his last hours, and the great success of his book. The figures seemed to him hardly credible, and when Webster assured him that already a guaranteed sale of one hundred thousand copies of his own biography had been pledged by the agents he seemed even more astonished.

"We in Italy cannot comprehend such things," he said. "I know you do great work in America; I know you have done a great and noble work in regard to General Grant's book, but that my Life should have such a sale seems impossible."

He asked about their home, their children, and was in every way the kindly, gentle-hearted man that his pictured face has shown him. Then he gave them his final blessing and the audience closed.

We each again kissed the seal on his ring. As Annie was about to kiss it he suddenly withdrew his hand and said, "And will you, a little Protestant, kiss the Pope's ring?" As he said this, his face was all smiles, and mischief was clearly delineated upon it. He immediately put back his hand and she kissed the ring. We now withdrew, backing out and making three genuflexions as before. Just as we reached the door he called to Dr. O'Reilly, "Now don't praise me too much; tell the truth, tell the truth."

CLX

A GREAT PUBLISHER AT HOME

MEN are likely to be spoiled by prosperity, to be made arrogant, even harsh. Success made Samuel Clemens merely elate, more kindly, more humanly generous. Every day almost he wrote to Webster, suggesting some new book or venture, but always considerately, always deferring to suggestions from other points of view. Once, when it seemed to him that matters were not going as well as usual, a visit from Webster showed him that it was because of his own continued absence from the business that he did not understand. Whereupon he wrote:

> DEAR CHARLEY,—Good—it's all good news. Everything is on the pleasantest possible basis now, and is going to stay so. I blame myself in not looking in on you oftener in the past—that would have prevented all trouble. I mean to stand to my duty better now.

At another time, realizing the press of responsibility, and that Webster was not entirely well, he sent a warning from Mrs. Clemens against overwork. He added:

> Your letter shows that you need such a warning. So I warn you myself to look after that. Overwork killed Mr. Langdon and it can kill you.

Clemens found his own cares greatly multiplied. His connection with the firm was widely known, and many authors sent him their manuscripts or wrote him personal letters concerning them. Furthermore, he was beset by all the cranks and beggars in Christendom. His affairs became so numerous at length that he employed a business agent, F. G. Whitmore, to relieve him of a part of his burden. Whitmore lived close by, and was a good billiard-player. Almost anything from the morning mail served as an excuse to send for Whitmore.

Clemens was fond of affairs when they were going well; he liked the game of business, especially when it was pretentious and showily prosperous. It is probable that he was never more satisfied with his share of fortune than just at this time. Certainly his home life was never happier. Katie Leary, for thirty years in the family service, has set down some impressions of that pleasant period.

Mr. Clemens was a very affectionate father. He seldom left the house at night, but would read to the family, first to the children until bedtime, afterward to Mrs. Clemens. He usually read Browning to her. They were very fond of it. The children played charades a great deal, and he was wonderful at that game and always helped them. They were very fond of private theatricals. Every Saturday of their lives thay had a temporary stage put up in the school-room and we all had to help. Gerhardt painted the scenery. They frequently played the balcony scene from "Romeo and Juliet" and several plays they wrote themselves. Now and then we had a big general performance of "The Prince and the Pauper." That would be in the library and the dining-room with the folding-doors open. The place just held eighty-four chairs, and the stage was placed back against the conservatory. The children were crazy about acting and we all enjoyed it as much as they did, especially Mr. Clemens, who was the best actor of all. I had a part, too, and George. I have never known a happier household than theirs was during those years.

Mr. Clemens spent most of his time up in the billiard-room, writing or playing billiards. One day when I went in, and he was shooting the balls around the tables, I noticed smoke coming up from the hearth. I called Patrick, and John O'Neill, the gardener, and we began taking up the hearth to see what was the matter. Mr. Clemens kept on playing billiards right along and paid no attention to what we were doing. Finally, when we got the hearth up, a lot of flame and smoke came out into the room. The house was on fire. Mr. Clemens noticed then what we were about, and went over to the corner where there were some bottle fire-extinguishers. He took one down and threw it into the flames. This put them out a good deal, and he took up his cue, went back to the table, and began to shoot the balls around again as if nothing had happened. Mrs. Clemens came in just then and said, "Why, the house is afire!"

"Yes, I know it," he said, but went on playing.

We had a telephone and it didn't work very well. It annoyed him a good deal and sometimes he'd say:

"I'll tear it out."

One day he tried to call up Mrs. Dr. Tafft. He could not hear plainly and thought he was talking to central. "Send down and take this d—— thing out of here," he said; "I'm tired of it." He was mad, and using a good deal of bad language. All at once he heard Mrs. Dr. Tafft say, "Oh, Mr. Clemens, good morning." He said, "Why, Mrs. Tafft, I have just come to the telephone. George, our butler, was here before me and I heard him swearing as I came up. I shall have to talk to him about it."

Mrs. Tafft often told it on him.[1]

Mrs. Clemens, before I went there, took care of his desk, but little by little I began to look after it when she was busy at other things. Finally I took care of it altogether, but he didn't know it for a long time. One morning he caught me at it. "What are you doing here?" he asked.

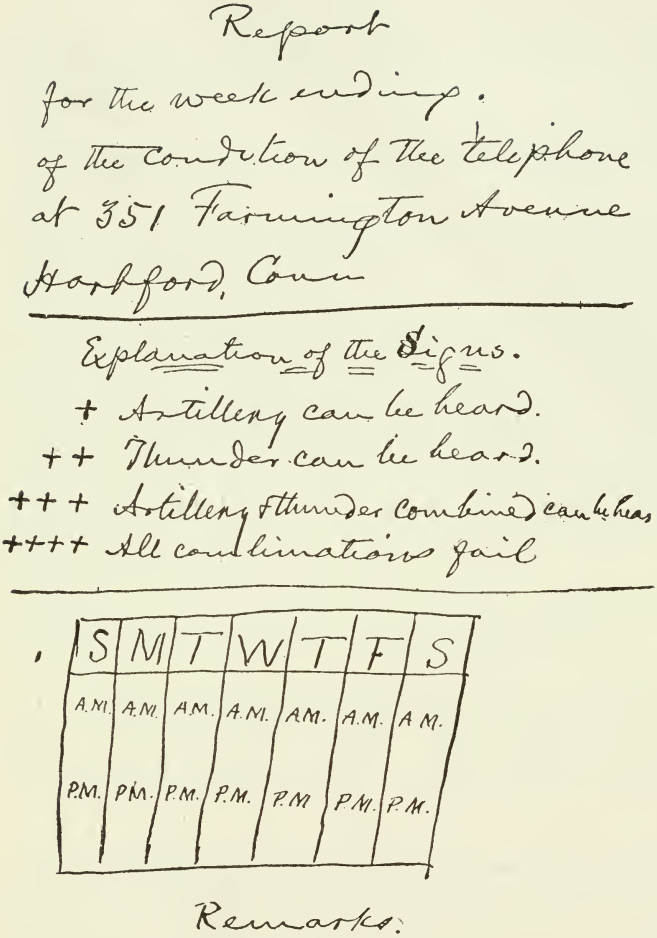
"Dusting, Mr. Clemens," I said.

"You have no business here," he said, very mad.

"I've been doing it for a year, Mr. Clemens," I said. "Mrs. Clemens told me to do it."

---

[1] Mark Twain once wrote to the telephone management: "The time is coming very soon when the telephone will be a perfect instrument, when proximity will no longer be a hindrance to its performance, when, in fact, one will hear a man who is in the next block just as easily and comfortably as he would if that man were in San Francisco."



Report

for the week ending.
of the condition of the telephone
at 351 Farmington Avenue
Hartford, Conn

Explanation of the Signs.

+ Artillery can be heard.
++ Thunder can be heard.
+++ Artillery & thunder combined can be heard
++++ All combinations fail

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.
P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.

Remarks:

CHART DESIGNED BY MARK TWAIN TO RECORD TELEPHONE TROUBLES

After that, when he missed anything—and he missed things often—he would ring for me. "Katie," he would say, "you have lost that manuscript."

"Oh, Mr. Clemens," I would say, "I am sure I didn't touch it."

"Yes, you did touch it, Katie. You put it in the fire. It is gone."

He would scold then, and fume a great deal. Then he would go over and mark out with his toe on the carpet a line which I was never to cross. "Katie," he would say, "you are never to go nearer to my desk than that line. That is the dead-line." Often after he had scolded me in the morning he would come in in the evening where I was dressing Mrs. Clemens to go out and say, "Katie, I found that manuscript." And I would say, "Mr. Clemens, I felt so bad this morning that I wanted to go away."

He had a pipe-cleaner which he kept on a high shelf. It was an awful old dirty one, and I didn't know that he ever used it. I took it to the balcony which was built out into the woods and threw it away as far as I could throw it. Next day he asked, "Katie, did you see my pipe-cleaner? You did see it; I can tell by your looks."

I said, "Yes, Mr. Clemens, I threw it away."

"Well," he said, "it was worth a thousand dollars," and it seemed so to me, too, before he got done scolding about it.

It is hard not to dwell too long on the home life of this period. One would like to make a long chapter out of those play-acting evenings alone. They remained always fresh in Mark Twain's memory. Once he wrote of them:

We dined as we could, probably with a neighbor, and by quarter to eight in the evening the hickory fire in the hall was pouring a sheet of flame up the chimney, the house was in a drench of gas-light from the ground floor up, the guests were arriving, and there was a babble of hearty greetings, with not a voice in it that was not old and familiar and affectionate; and when the curtain went up we looked out from the stage upon none but faces that were dear to us, none but faces that were lit up with welcome for us.

CLXI

HISTORY: MAINLY BY SUSY

SUSY, in her biography, which she continued through this period, writes:

> Mama and I have both been very much troubled of late because papa, since he had been publishing General Grant's books, has seemed to forget his own books and works entirely; and the other evening, as papa and I were promonading up and down the library, he told me that he didn't expect to write but one more book, and then he was ready to give up work altogether, die, or do anything; he said that he had written more than he had ever expected to, and the only book that he had been perticularly anxious to write was one locked up in the safe downstairs, not yet published.

The book locked in the safe was *Captain Stormfield*, and the one he expected to write was *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court.* He had already worked at it in a desultory way during the early months of 1886, and once wrote of it to Webster:

> I have begun a book whose scene is laid far back in the twilight of tradition; I have saturated myself with the atmosphere of the day and the subject and got myself into the swing of the work. If I peg away for some weeks without a break I am safe.

But he could not peg away. He had too many irons in the fire for that. Matthew Arnold had criticized General Grant's English, and Clemens immediately put down other things to rush to his hero's defense. He pointed out that in Arnold's criticism there were no less than "two grammatical crimes and more than several examples of very crude and slovenly English," and said:

> There is that about the sun which makes us forget his spots, and when we think of General Grant our pulses quicken and his grammar vanishes; we only remember that this is the simple soldier, who, all untaught of the silken phrase-makers, linked words together with an art surpassing the art of the schools, and put into them a something which will still bring to American ears, as long as America shall last, the roll of his vanished drums and the tread of his marching hosts.[1]

Clemens worked at the *Yankee* now and then, and Howells, when some of the chapters were read to him, gave it warm approval and urged its continuance.

Howells was often in Hartford at this time. Webster & Co. were planning to publish *The Library of Humor*, which Howells and "Charley" Clark had edited several years before, and occasional conferences were desirable. Howells tells us that, after he and Clark had been at great trouble to get the matter logically and chronologically arranged, Clemens pulled it all to pieces and threw it together helter-skelter, declaring that there ought to be no sequence in a book of that sort, any more than in the average reader's mind; and Howells admits that this was probably the truer method in a book made for the diversion rather than the instruction of the reader.

One of the literary diversions of this time was a commentary on a delicious little book by Caroline B. Le Row —*English as She Is Taught*—being a compilation of genuine answers given to examination questions by pupils in our public schools. Mark Twain was amused by such definitions as: "Aborigines—a system of mountains"; "Alias—a good man in the Bible"; "Ammonia—the food of the gods," and so on down the alphabet.

---

[1] Address to Army and Navy Club. For full text see Appendix Q, last volume.

Susy, in her biography, mentions that her father at this time read to them a little article which he had just written, entitled "Luck," and that they thought it very good. It was a story which Twichell had heard and told to Clemens, who set it down about as it came to him. It was supposed to be true, yet Clemens seemed to think it too improbable for literature and laid it away for a number of years. We shall hear of it again by and by.

From Susy's memoranda we gather that humanity at this time was to be healed of all evils and sorrows through "mind cure":

Papa has been very much interested of late in the "mind-cure" theory. And, in fact, so have we all. A young lady in town has worked wonders by using the "mind cure" upon people; she is constantly busy now curing peoples' diseases in this way—and curing her own, even, which to me seems the most remarkable of all.

A little while past papa was delighted with the knowledge of what he thought the best way of curing a cold, which was by starving it. This starving did work beautifully, and freed him from a great many severe colds. Now he says it wasn't the starving that helped his colds, but the trust in the starving, the "mind cure" connected with the starving.

I shouldn't wonder if we finally became firm believers in "mind cure." The next time papa has a cold I haven't a doubt he will send for Miss Holden, the young lady who is doctoring in the "mind-cure" theory, to cure him of it.

Again, a month later, she writes:

April 19, 1886. Yes, the "mind cure" *does* seem to be working wonderfully. Papa, who has been using glasses now for more than a year, has laid them off entirely. And my near-sightedness is really getting better. It seems marvelous. When Jean has stomack-ache Clara and I have tried to divert her by telling her to lie on her side and try "mind cure." The novelty of it has made her willing to try it, and then Clara

> and I would exclaim about how wonderful it was she was getting better. And she would think it realy was finally, and stop crying, to our delight.
>
> The other day mama went into the library and found her lying on the sofa with her back toward the door. She said, "Why, Jean, what's the matter? Don't you feel well?" Jean said that she had a little stomack-ache, and so thought she would lie down. Mama said, "Why don't you try 'mind cure'?" "I am," Jean answered.

Howells and Twichell were invited to try the "mind cure," as were all other friends who happened along. To the end of his days Clemens would always have some panacea to offer to allay human distress. It was a good trait, when all is said, for it had its root in his humanity. The "mind cure" did not provide all the substance of things hoped for, though he always allowed for it a wide efficacy. Once, in later years, commenting on Susy's record, he said:

> The mind cannot heal broken bones, and doubtless there are many other physical ills which it cannot heal, but it can greatly help to modify the severities of all of them without exception, and there are mental and nervous ailments which it can wholly heal without the help of physician or surgeon.

Susy records another burning interest of this time:

> Clara sprained her ankle a little while ago by running into a tree when coasting, and while she was unable to walk with it she played solotaire with cards a great deal. While Clara was sick and papa saw her play solotaire so much he got very much interested in the game, and finally began to play it himself a little; then Jean took it up, and at last *mama* even played it occasionally; Jean's and papa's love for it rapidly increased, and now Jean brings the cards every night to the table and papa and mama help her play, and before dinner is at an end papa has gotten a separate pack of cards and is playing alone, with great interest. Mama and Clara next are made subject

> to the contagious solotaire, and there are four solotarireans at the table, while you hear nothing but "Fill up the place," etc. It is dreadful!

But a little further along Susy presents her chief subject more seriously. He is not altogether absorbed with "mind cure" and solitaire, or even with making humorous tales.

> Papa has done a great deal in his life I think that is good and very remarkable, but I think if he had had the advantages with which he could have developed the gifts which he has made no use of in writing his books, or in any other way, for peoples' pleasure and benefit outside of his own family and intimate friends, he could have done *more* than he has, and a great deal more, even. He is known to the public as a humorist, but he has much more in him that is earnest than that is humorous. He has a keen sense of the ludicrous, notices funny stories and incidents, knows how to tell them, to improve upon them, and does not forget them.

And again:

> When we are all alone at home nine times out of ten he talks about some very earnest subject (with an occasional joke thrown in), and he a good deal more often talks upon such subjects than upon the other kind.
>
> He is as much of a philosopher as anything, I think. I think he could have done a great deal in this direction if he had studied while young, for he seems to enjoy reasoning out things, no matter what; in a great many such directions he has greater ability than in the gifts which have made him famous.

It was with the keen eyes and just mind of childhood that Susy estimated, and there is little to add to her valuation.

Susy's biography came to an end that summer after starting to record a visit which they all made to Keokuk to see Grandma Clemens. They went by way of the Lakes and down the Mississippi from St. Paul. A pleasant incident happened that first evening on the river. Soon after nightfall they entered a shoal crossing. Clemens, standing alone on the hurricane-deck, heard the big bell forward boom out the call for leads. Then came the leadsman's long-drawn chant, once so familiar, the monotonous repeating in river parlance of the depths of water. Presently the lead had found that depth of water signified by his *nom de plume* and the call of "Mark Twain, Mark Twain" floated up to him like a summons from the past. All at once a little figure came running down the deck, and Clara confronted him, reprovingly:

"Papa," she said, "I have hunted all over the boat for you. Don't you know they are calling for you?"

They remained in Keokuk a week, and Susy starts to tell something of their visit there. She begins:

"We have arrived in Keokuk after a very pleasant—"

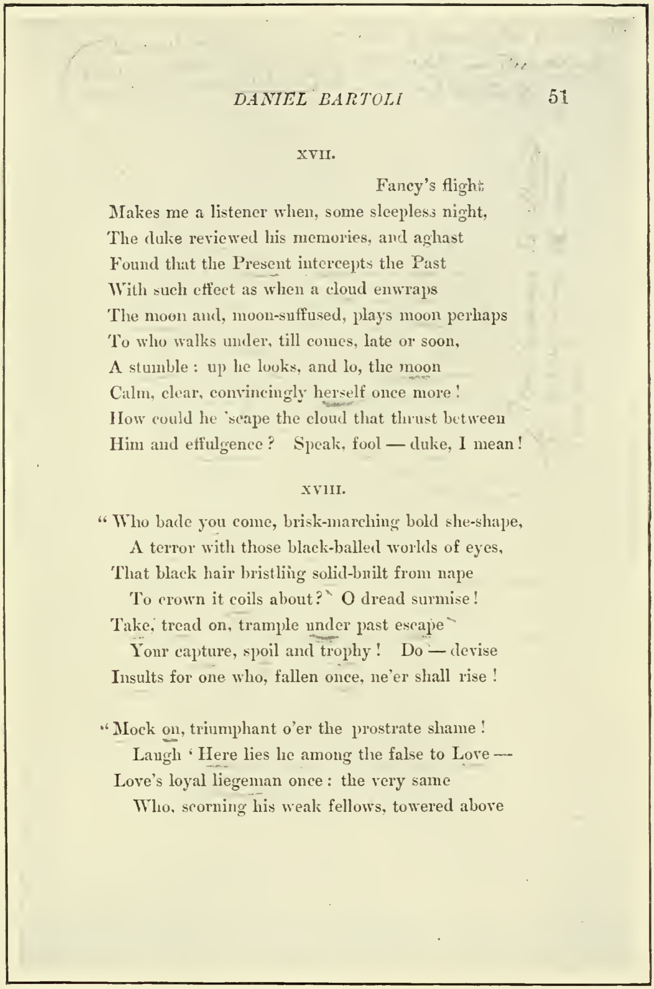
The sentence remains unfinished. We cannot know what was the interruption or what new interest kept her from her task. We can only regret that the loving little hand did not continue its pleasant history. Years later, when Susy had passed from among the things we know, her father, commenting, said:

> When I look at the arrested sentence that ends the little book it seems as if the hand that traced it cannot be far—it is gone for a moment only, and will come again and finish it. But that is a dream; a creature of the heart, not of the mind—a feeling, a longing, not a mental product; the same that lured Aaron Burr, old, gray, forlorn, forsaken, to the pier day after day, week after week, there to stand in the gloom and the chill of the dawn, gazing seaward through veiling mists and sleet and snow for the ship which he knew was gone down, the ship that bore all his treasure—his daughter.

CLXII

BROWNING, MEREDITH, AND MEISTERSCHAFT

THE Browning readings must have begun about this time. Just what kindled Mark Twain's interest in the poetry of Robert Browning is not remembered, but very likely his earlier associations with the poet had something to do with it. Whatever the beginning, we find him, during the winter of 1886 and 1887, studiously, even violently, interested in Browning's verses, entertaining a sort of club or class who gathered to hear his rich, sympathetic, and luminous reading of the *Parleyings*—"With Bernard de Mandeville," "Daniel Bartoli," or "Christopher Smart." Members of the Saturday Morning Club were among his listeners and others—friends of the family. They were rather remarkable gatherings, and no one of that group but always vividly remembered the marvelously clear insight which Mark Twain's vocal personality gave to those somewhat obscure measures. They did not all of them realize that before reading a poem he studied it line by line, even word by word; dug out its last syllable of meaning, so far as lay within human possibility, and indicated with pencil every shade of emphasis which would help to reveal the poet's purpose. No student of Browning ever more devoutly persisted in trying to compass a master's intent—in such poems as "Sordello," for instance—than Mark Twain. Just what permanent benefit he received from this particular passion it is difficult to know. Once, at a class-meeting, after finishing "Easter Day," he made a remark which the class requested him



DANIEL BARTOLI 51

XVII.

Fancy's flight
Makes me a listener when, some sleepless night,
The duke reviewed his memories, and aghast
Found that the Present intercepts the Past
With such effect as when a cloud enwraps
The moon and, moon-suffused, plays moon perhaps
To who walks under, till comes, late or soon,
A stumble : up he looks, and lo, the moon
Calm, clear, convincingly herself once more !
How could he 'scape the cloud that thrust between
Him and effulgence ? Speak, fool — duke, I mean !

XVIII.

"Who bade you come, brisk-marching bold she-shape,
A terror with those black-balled worlds of eyes,
That black hair bristling solid-built from nape
To crown it coils about? O dread surmise!
Take, tread on, trample under past escape
Your capture, spoil and trophy ! Do — devise
Insults for one who, fallen once, ne'er shall rise !

"Mock on, triumphant o'er the prostrate shame !
Laugh 'Here lies he among the false to Love —
Love's loyal liegeman once : the very same
Who, scorning his weak fellows, towered above

A PAGE OF MARK TWAIN'S "BROWNING" ARRANGED FOR READING ALOUD

to "write down." It is recorded on the fly-leaf of *Dramatis Personæ* as follows:

> One's glimpses & confusions, as one reads Browning, remind me of looking through a telescope (the small sort which you must move with your hand, not clock-work). You toil across dark spaces which are (to *your* lens) empty; but every now & then a splendor of stars & suns bursts upon you and fills the whole field with flame. Feb. 23, 1887.

In another note he speaks of the "vague dim flash of splendid humming-birds through a fog." Whatever mental treasures he may or may not have laid up from Browning there was assuredly a deep gratification in the discovery of those splendors of "stars and suns" and the flashing "humming-birds," as there must also have been in pointing out those wonders to the little circle of devout listeners. It all seemed so worth while.

It was at a time when George Meredith was a reigning literary favorite. There was a Meredith cult as distinct as that of Browning. Possibly it exists to-day, but, if so, it is less militant. Mrs. Clemens and her associates were caught in the Meredith movement and read *Diana of the Crossways* and the *Egoist* with reverential appreciation.

The Meredith epidemic did not touch Mark Twain. He read but few novels at most, and, skilful as was the artistry of the English favorite, he found his characters artificialities—ingeniously contrived puppets rather than human beings, and, on the whole, overrated by their creator. *Diana of the Crossways* was read aloud, and, listening now and then, he was likely to say:

"It doesn't seem to me that Diana lives up to her reputation. The author keeps telling us how smart she is, how brilliant, but I never seem to hear her say anything smart or brilliant. Read me some of Diana's smart utterances."

He was relentless enough in his criticism of a literature he did not care for, and he never learned to care for Meredith.

He read his favorite books over and over with an ever-changing point of view. He re-read Carlyle's *French Revolution* during the summer at the farm, and to Howells he wrote:

> How stunning are the changes which age makes in man while he sleeps! When I finished Carlyle's *French Revolution* in 1871 I was a Girondin; every time I have read it since I have read it differently—being influenced & changed, little by little, by life & environment (& Taine & St. Simon); & now I lay the book down once more, & recognize that I am a Sansculotte!—And not a pale, characterless Sansculotte, but a Marat. Carlyle teaches no such gospel, so the change is in *me*—in my vision of the evidences.
>
> People pretend that the Bible means the same to them at 50 that it did at all former milestones in their journey. I wonder how they can lie so. It comes of practice, no doubt. They would not say that of Dickens's or Scott's books. *Nothing* remains the same. When a man goes back to look at the house of his childhood it has always *shrunk;* there is no instance of such house being as big as the picture in memory & imagination call for. Shrunk how? Why, to its correct dimensions; the house hasn't altered; this is the first time it has been in focus.
>
> Well, that's loss. To have house & Bible shrink so, under the disillusioning corrected angle, is loss—for a moment. But there are compensations. You tilt the tube skyward & bring planets & comets & corona flames a hundred & fifty thousand miles high into the field. Which I see you have done, & found Tolstoi. I haven't got him in focus yet, but I've got Browning.

In time the Browning passion would wane and pass, and the club was succeeded by, or perhaps it blended with, a German class which met at regular intervals at the Clemens home to study "*der*, *die*, and *das*" and the "*gehabt habens*" out of Meisterschaft and such other text-books as Professor Schleutter could provide. They had monthly conversation days, when they discussed in German all sorts of things, real and imaginary. Once Dr. Root, a prominent member, and Clemens had a long wrangle over painting a house, in which they impersonated two German neighbors.

Clemens finally wrote for the class a three-act play—"Meisterschaft"—a literary achievement for which he was especially qualified, with its picturesque mixture of German and English and its unfailing humor. It seems unlike anything ever attempted before or since. No one but Mark Twain could have written it. It was given twice by the class with enormous success, and in modified form it was published in the *Century Magazine* (January, 1888). It is included to-day in his "Complete Works," but one must have a fair knowledge of German to capture the full delight of it.[1]

Mark Twain probably exaggerated his sentiments a good deal when in the Carlyle letter he claimed to be the most rabid of Sansculottes. It is unlikely that he was ever very bare-kneed and crimson in his anarchy. He believed always that cruelty should be swiftly punished, whether in king or commoner, and that tyrants should be destroyed. He was for the people as against kings, and for the union of labor as opposed to the union of capital, though he wrote of such matters judicially—not radically. The Knights of Labor organization, then very powerful, seemed to Clemens the salvation of oppressed humanity. He wrote a vehement and convincing paper on the subject, which he sent to Howells, to whom it appealed very strongly, for Howells was socialistic, in a sense, and Clemens made his appeal in the best and largest sense, dramatizing his conception in a picture that was to include, in one grand league, labor of whatever form, and, in the end, all mankind in a final millennium. Howells wrote that he had read the essay "with thrills amounting to yells of satisfaction, and declared it to be the best thing yet said on the subject. The essay closed:

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[1] On the original manuscript Mark Twain wrote: "There is some tolerably rancid German here and there in this piece. It is attributable to the proof-reader."

Perhaps the proof-reader resented this and cut it out, for it does not appear as published.

> He [the unionized workman] is here and he will remain. He is the greatest birth of the greatest age the nations of the world have known. You cannot sneer at him—that time has gone by. He has before him the most righteous work that was ever given into the hand of man to do; and he will do it. Yes, he is here; and the question is not—as it has been heretofore during a thousand ages—What shall we do with him? For the first time in history we are relieved of the necessity of managing his affairs for him. He is not a broken dam this time—he is the Flood!

It must have been about this time that Clemens developed an intense, even if a less permanent, interest in another matter which was to benefit the species. He was one day walking up Fifth Avenue when he noticed the sign:

PROFESSOR LOISETTE

SCHOOL OF MEMORY

The Instantaneous Art of Never Forgetting

Clemens went inside. When he came out he had all of Professor Loisette's literature on "predicating correlation," and for the next several days was steeping himself in an infusion of meaningless words and figures and sentences and forms, which he must learn backward and forward and diagonally, so that he could repeat them awake and asleep in order to predicate his correlation to a point where remembering the ordinary facts of life, such as names, addresses, and telephone numbers, would be a mere diversion.

It was another case of learning the multitudinous details of the Mississippi River in order to do the apparently simple thing of steering a boat from New Orleans to St. Louis, and it is fair to say that, for the time he gave it, he achieved a like success. He was so enthusiastic over this new remedy for human distress that within a very brief time he was sending out a printed letter recommending Loisette to the public at large. Here is an extract:

> . . . I had no SYSTEM—and some sort of rational order of procedure is, of course, necessary to success in any study. Well, Loisette furnished me a system. I cannot undertake to say it is the best, or the worst, because I don't know what the other systems are.
>
> Loisette, among other cruelties, requires you to memorize a great long string of words that haven't any apparent connection or meaning—there are perhaps 500 of these words, arranged in maniacal lines of 6 to 8 or 9 words in each line—71 lines in all. Of course your first impulse is to resign, but at the end of three or four hours you find to your surprise that you've GOT them and can deliver them backward or forward without mistake or hesitation. Now, don't you see what a world of confidence that must necessarily breed?—confidence in a memory which before you wouldn't even venture to trust with the Latin motto of the U. S. lest it mislay it and the country suffer.
>
> Loisette doesn't make memories, he furnishes confidence in memories that already exist. Isn't that valuable? Indeed it is to me. Whenever hereafter I shall choose to pack away a thing properly in that refrigerator I sha'n't be bothered with the aforetime doubts; I shall know I'm going to find it sound and sweet when I go for it again.

Loisette naturally made the most of this advertising and flooded the public with Mark Twain testimonials. But presently Clemens decided that after all the system was not sufficiently simple to benefit the race at large. He recalled his printed letters and prevailed upon Loisette to suppress his circulars. Later he decided that the whole system was a humbug.

CLXIII

A LETTER TO THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND

IT was one day in 1887 that Clemens received evidence that his reputation as a successful author and publisher—a man of wealth and revenues—had penetrated even the dimness of the British Tax Offices. A formidable envelope came, inclosing a letter from his London publishers and a very large printed document all about the income tax which the Queen's officers had levied upon his English royalties as the result of a report that he had taken Buckenham Hall, Norwich, for a year, and was to become an English resident. The matter amused and interested him. To Chatto & Windus he wrote:

> I will explain that all that about Buckenham Hall was an English newspaper's mistake. I was not in England, and if I had been I wouldn't have been at Buckenham Hall anyway, but Buckingham Palace, or I would have endeavored to have found out the reason why. . . .
>
> But we won't resist. We'll pay as if I were really a resident. The country that allows me copyright has a right to tax me.

Reflecting on the matter, Clemens decided to make literature of it. He conceived the notion of writing an open letter to the Queen in the character of a rambling, garrulous, but well-disposed countryman whose idea was that her Majesty conducted all the business of the empire herself. He began:

> HARTFORD, *November 6, 1887.*
>
> MADAM,—You will remember that last May Mr. Edward Bright, the clerk of the Inland Revenue Office, wrote me about

> a tax which he said was due from me to the Government on books of mine published in London—that is to say, an income tax on the royalties. I do not know Mr. Bright, and it is embarrassing to me to correspond with strangers, for I was raised in the country and have always lived there, the early part in Marion County, Missouri, before the war, and this part in Hartford County, Connecticut, near Bloomfield and about 8 miles this side of Farmington, though some call it 9, which it is impossible to be, for I have walked it many and many a time in considerably under three hours, and General Hawley says he has done it in two and a quarter, which is not likely; so it has seemed best that I write your Majesty.

The letter proceeded to explain that he had never met her Majesty personally, but that he once met her son, the Prince of Wales, in Oxford Street, at the head of a procession, while he himself was on the top of an omnibus. He thought the Prince would probably remember him on account of a gray coat with flap pockets which he wore, he being the only person on the omnibus who had on that kind of a coat.

"I remember *him*," he said, "as easily as I would a comet."

He explained the difficulty he had in understanding under what heading he was taxed. There was a foot-note on the list which stated that he was taxed under "Schedule D, section 14." He had turned to that place and found these three things: "Trades, Offices, Gas Works." He did not regard authorship as a trade, and he had no office, so he did not consider that he was taxable under "Schedule D, section 14." The letter concludes:

> Having thus shown your Majesty that I am not taxable, but am the victim of the error of a clerk who mistakes the nature of my commerce, it only remains for me to beg that you will, of your justice, annul my letter that I spoke of, so that my publisher can keep back that tax money which, in the confusion and aberration caused by the Document, I ordered him to pay.

You will not miss the sum, but this is a hard year for authors, and as for lectures I do not suppose your Majesty ever saw such a dull season.

With always great and ever-increasing respect, I beg to sign myself your Majesty's servant to command,

MARK TWAIN.

Her Majesty the Queen, London.

The letter, or "petition," as it was called, was published in the *Harper's Magazine* "Drawer" (December, 1887), and is now included in the "Complete Works." Taken as a whole it is one of the most exquisite of Mark Twain's minor humors. What other humorist could have refrained from hinting, at least, the inference suggested by the obvious "Gas Works"? Yet it was a subtler art to let his old, simple-minded countryman ignore that detail. The little skit was widely copied and reached the Queen herself in due time, and her son, Prince Edward, who never forgot its humor.

Clemens read a notable paper that year before the Monday Evening Club. Its subject was "Consistency"—political consistency—and in it he took occasion to express himself pretty vigorously regarding the virtue of loyalty to party before principle, as exemplified in the Blaine-Cleveland campaign. It was in effect a scathing reply to those who, three years before, had denounced Twichell and himself for standing by their convictions.[1]

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[1] Characteristic paragraphs from this paper will be found under Appendix R, at the end of last volume.

CLXIV

SOME FURTHER ACCOUNT OF CHARLES L. WEBSTER & CO.

FLOOD-TIDE is a temporary condition, and the ebb in the business of Charles L. Webster & Co., though very deliberate, was not delayed in its beginning. Most of the books published—the early ones at least—were profitable. McClellan's memoirs paid, as did others of the war series.

Even *The Life of Pope Leo XIII.* paid. What a statement to make, after all their magnificent dreams and preparations! It was published simultaneously in six languages. It was exploited in every conceivable fashion, and its aggregate sales fell far short of the number which the general agents had promised for their first orders. It was amazing, it was incredible, but, alas! it was true. The prospective Catholic purchaser had decided that the Pope's *Life* was not necessary to his salvation or even to his entertainment. Howells explains it, to his own satisfaction at least, when he says:

> We did not consider how often Catholics could not read, how often, when they could, they might not wish to read. The event proved that, whether they could read or not, the immeasurable majority did not wish to read *The Life of the Pope*, though it was written by a dignitary of the Church and issued to the world with sanction from the Vatican.

Howells, of course, is referring to the laboring Catholic of that day. There are no Catholics of this day—no American Catholics, at least—who do not read, and money among them has become plentiful. Perhaps had the Pope's *Life* been issued in this new hour of enlightenment the tale of its success might have been less sadly told.

A variety of books followed. Henry Ward Beecher agreed to write an autobiography, but he died just when he was beginning the work, and the biography, which his family put together, brought only a moderate return. A book of Sandwich Islands tales and legends, by his Hawaiian Majesty King Kalakaua, edited by Clemens's old friend, Rollin M. Daggett, who had become United States minister to the islands, barely paid for the cost of manufacture, while a volume of reminiscences by General Hancock was still less fortunate. The running expenses of the business were heavy. On the strength of the Grant success Webster had moved into still larger quarters at No. 3 East Fifteenth Street, and had a ground floor for a salesroom. The force had become numerous and costly. It was necessary that a book should pay largely to maintain this pretentious establishment. A number of books were published at a heavy loss. Never mind their titles; we may forget them, with the name of the bookkeeper who presently embezzled thirty thousand dollars of the firm's money and returned but a trifling sum.

By the end of 1887 there were three works in prospect on which great hopes were founded—*The Library of Humor*, which Howells and Clark had edited; a personal memoir of General Sheridan's, and a *Library of American Literature* in ten volumes, compiled by Edmund Clarence Stedman and Ellen Mackay Hutchinson. It was believed these would restore the fortunes and the prestige of the firm. They were all excellent, attractive features. *The Library of Humor* was ably selected and contained two hundred choice drawings by Kemble. The Sheridan *Memoir* was finely written, and the public interest in it was bound to be general. *The Library of American Literature* was a collection of the best American writing, and seemed bound to appeal to every American reading-home. It was necessary to borrow most of the money required to build these books, for the profit made from the Grant Life and less fortunate ventures was pretty well exhausted. Clemens presently found a little drift of his notes accumulating at this bank and that—a disturbing condition, when he remembered it, for he was financing the type-setting machine by this time, and it was costing a pretty sum.

Meantime, Webster was no longer active in the management. In two years he had broken down from overwork, and was now desperately ill with an acute neuralgia that kept him away from the business most of the time. Its burdens had fallen upon his assistant, Fred J. Hall, a willing, capable young man, persevering and hopeful, lacking only years and experience. Hall worked like a beaver, and continually looked forward to success. He explained, with each month's report of affairs, just why the business had not prospered more during that particular month, and just why its profits would be greater during the next. Webster finally retired from the business altogether, and Hall was given a small partnership in the firm. He reduced expenses, worked desperately, pumping out the debts, and managed to keep the craft afloat.

The Library of Humor, the Life of Sheridan, and *The Library of American Literature* all sold very well; not so well as had been hoped, but the sales yielded a fair profit. It was thought that if Clemens himself would furnish a new book now and then the business might regain something of its original standing.

We may believe that Clemens had not been always patient, not always gentle, during this process of decline. He had differed with Webster, and occasionally had gone down and reconstructed things after his own notions. Once he wrote to Orion that he had suddenly awakened to find that there was no more system in the office than in a nursery without a nurse.

"But," he added, "I have spent a good deal of time there since, and reduced everything to exact order and system."

Just what were the new features of order instituted it would be interesting to know. That the financial pressure was beginning to be felt even in the Clemens home is shown by a Christmas letter to Mrs. Moffett.

HARTFORD, *December 18, 1887.*

DEAR PAMELA,—Will you take this $15 & buy some candy or other trifle for yourself & Sam & his wife to remind you that we remember you?

If we weren't a little crowded this year by the type-setter I'd send a check large enough to buy a family Bible or some other useful thing like that. However, we go on & on, but the type-setter goes on forever—at $3,000 a month; which is much more satisfactory than was the case the first 17 months, when the bill only averaged $2,000, & promised to take a thousand years. We'll be through now in 3 or 4 months, I reckon, & then the strain will let up and we can breathe freely once more, whether success ensues or failure.

Even with a type-setter on hand we ought not to be in the least scrimped—but it would take a long letter to explain why & who is to blame.

All the family send love to all of you, & best Christmas wishes for your prosperity.

Affectionately,

SAM.

CLXV

LETTERS, VISITS, AND VISITORS

THERE were many pleasanter things, to be sure. The farm life never failed with each returning summer; the winters brought gay company and fair occasions. Sir Henry and Lady Stanley, visiting America, were entertained in the Clemens home, and Clemens went on to Boston to introduce Stanley to his lecture audience. Charles Dickens's son, with his wife and daughter, followed a little later. An incident of their visit seems rather amusing now. There is a custom in England which requires the host to give the guest notice of bedtime by handing him a lighted candle. Mrs. Clemens knew of this custom, but did not have the courage to follow it in her own home, and the guests knew of no other way to relieve the situation; as a result, all sat up much later than usual. Eventually Clemens himself suggested that possibly the guests would like to retire.

Robert Louis Stevenson came down from Saranac, and Clemens went in to visit him at his New York hotel, the St. Stevens, on East Eleventh Street. Stevenson had orders to sit in the sunshine as much as possible, and during the few days of their association he and Clemens would walk down to Washington Square and sit on one of the benches and talk. They discussed many things—philosophies, people, books; it seems a pity their talk could not have been preserved.

Stevenson was a great admirer of Mark Twain's work. He said that during a recent painting of his portrait he had insisted on reading *Huck Finn* aloud to the artist, a Frenchman, who had at first protested, and finally had fallen a complete victim to Huck's yarn. In one of Stevenson's letters to Clemens he wrote:

> My father, an old man, has been prevailed upon to read *Roughing It* (his usual amusement being found in theology), and after one evening spent with the book he declared: "I am frightened. It cannot be safe for a man at my time of life to laugh so much."

What heaps of letters, by the way, remain from this time, and how curious some of them are! Many of them are requests of one sort or another, chiefly for money—one woman asking for a single day's income, conservatively estimated at five thousand dollars. Clemens seldom answered an unwarranted letter; but at one time he began a series of unmailed answers—that is to say, answers in which he had let himself go merely to relieve his feelings and to restore his spiritual balance. He prepared an introduction for this series. In it he said:

> . . . You receive a letter. You read it. It will be tolerably sure to produce one of three results: 1, pleasure; 2, displeasure; 3, indifference. I do not need to say anything about Nos. 1 & 3; everybody knows what to do with those breeds of letters; it is breed No. 2 that I am after. It is the one that is loaded up with trouble.
>
> When you get an exasperating letter what happens? If you are young you answer it promptly, instantly—and mail the thing you have written. At forty what do you do? By that time you have found out that a letter written in a passion is a mistake in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred; that it usually wrongs two persons, and *always* wrongs one—yourself. You have grown weary of wronging yourself and repenting; so you manacle, you fetter, you log-chain the frantic impulse to write a pulverizing answer. You will wait a day or die. But in the mean time what do you *do?* Why, if it is about dinner-time, you sit at table in a deep abstraction all through the meal; you

try to throw it off and help do the talking; you get a start three or four times, but conversation dies on your lips every time—your mind isn't on it; your heart isn't in it. You give up, and subside into a bottomless deep of silence, permanently; people must speak to you two or three times to get your attention, and then say it over again to make you understand. This kind of thing goes on all the rest of the evening; nobody can interest you in anything; you are useless, a depressing influence, a burden. You go to bed at last; but at three in the morning you are as wide awake as you were in the beginning. Thus we see what you have been doing for nine hours—on the outside. But what were you doing on the inside? You were *writing letters*—in your mind. And enjoying it, that is quite true; that is not to be denied. You have been flaying your correspondent alive with your incorporeal pen; you have been braining him, disemboweling him, carving him into little bits, and then—doing it all over again. For nine hours.

It was wasted time, for you had no intention of putting any of this insanity on paper and mailing it. Yes, you know that, and confess it—but what were you to do? Where was your remedy? Will anybody contend that a man can say to such masterful anger as that, Go, and be obeyed?

No, he cannot; that is certainly true. Well, then, what is he to do? I will explain by the suggestion contained in my opening paragraph. During the nine hours he has written as many as forty-seven furious letters—in his mind. If he had put just *one* of them on paper it would have brought him relief, saved him eight hours of trouble, and given him an hour's red-hot pleasure besides.

He is not to *mail* this letter; he understands that, and so he can turn on the whole volume of his wrath; there is no harm. He is only writing it to get the bile out. So to speak, he is a volcano: imaging himself erupting does no good; he must open up his crater and pour out in reality his intolerable charge of lava if he would get relief.

Before he has filled his first sheet sometimes the relief is there. He degenerates into good-nature from that point.

Sometimes the load is so hot and so great that one writes as many as three letters before he gets down to a mailable one; a very angry one, a less angry one, and an argumentative one with hot embers in it here and there. He pigeonholes these and then does one of two things—dismisses the whole matter from his mind or writes the proper sort of letter and mails it.

To this day I lose my balance and send an overwarm letter—or more frequently telegram—two or three times a year. But that is better than doing it a hundred times a year, as I used to do years ago. Perhaps I write about as many as ever, but I pigeonhole them. They ought not to be thrown away. Such a letter a year or so old is as good as a sermon to the man who wrote it. It makes him feel small and shabby, but—well, that wears off. Any sermon does; but the sermon does some little good, anyway. An old cold letter like that makes you wonder how you could ever have got into such a rage about nothing.

The unmailed answers that were to accompany this introduction were plentiful enough and generally of a fervent sort. One specimen will suffice. It was written to the chairman of a hospital committee.

Dear Sir,—If I were Smithfield I would certainly go out and get behind something and blush. According to your report, "the politicians are afraid to tax the people for the support" of so humane and necessary a thing as a hospital. And do your "people" propose to stand that?—at the hands of vermin officials whom the breath of their votes could blow out of official existence in a moment if they had the pluck to band themselves together and blow. Oh, come, these are not "people"—they are cowed school-boys with backbones made of boiled macaroni. If you are not misreporting those "people" you are just in the right business passing the mendicant hat for them. Dear sir, communities where anything like citizenship exists are accustomed to hide their shames, but here we have one proposing to get up a great "exposition" of its dishonor and advertise it all it can.

It has been eleven years since I wrote anything for one of those graveyards called a "Fair paper," and so I have doubtless lost the knack of it somewhat; still I have done the best I could for you.

This was from a burning heart and well deserved. One may almost regret that he did not send it.

Once he received a letter intended for one Samuel Clements, of Elma, New York, announcing that the said Clements's pension had been allowed. But this was amusing. When Clemens had forwarded the notice to its proper destination he could not resist sending this comment to the commissioner at Washington:

> Dear Sir,—I have not applied for a pension. I have often wanted a pension—often—ever so often—I may say, but inasmuch as the only military service I performed during the war was in the Confederate army, I have always felt a delicacy about asking you for it. However, since you have suggested the thing yourself, I feel strengthened. I haven't any very pensionable diseases myself, but I can furnish a substitute—a man who is just simply a chaos, a museum of all the different kinds of aches and pains, fractures, dislocations and malformations there are; a man who would regard "rheumatism and sore eyes" as mere recreation and refreshment after the serious occupations of his day. If you grant me the pension, dear sir, please hand it to General Jos. Hawley, United States Senator—I mean hand him the certificate, not the money, and he will forward it to me. You will observe by this postal-card which I inclose that he takes a friendly interest in the matter. He thinks I've already got the pension, whereas I've only got the rheumatism; but didn't want that—I had that before. I wish it were catching. I know a man that I would load up with it pretty early. Lord, but we all feel that way sometimes. I've seen the day when—but never mind that; you may be busy; just hand it to Hawley—the certificate, you understand, is not transferable.

Clemens was in good standing at Washington during the Cleveland administration, and many letters came, asking him to use his influence with the President to obtain this or that favor. He always declined, though once—a few years later, in Europe—when he learned that Frank Mason, consul-general at Frankfort, was about to be displaced, Clemens, of his own accord, wrote to Baby Ruth Cleveland about it.

> My dear Ruth,—I belong to the Mugwumps, and one of the most sacred rules of our order prevents us from asking favors of officials or recommending men to office, but there is no harm in writing a friendly letter to you and telling you that an infernal outrage is about to be committed by your father in turning out of office the best Consul I know (and I know a great many) just because he is a Republican and a Democrat wants his place.

He went on to recall Mason's high and honorable record, suggesting that Miss Ruth take the matter into her own hands. Then he said:

> I can't send any message to the President, but the next time you have a talk with him concerning such matters I wish you would tell him about Captain Mason and what I think of a Government that so treats its efficient officials.

Just what form of appeal the small agent made is not recorded, but by and by Mark Twain received a tiny envelope, postmarked Washington, inclosing this note in President Cleveland's handwriting:

> Miss Ruth Cleveland begs to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Twain's letter and say that she took the liberty of reading it to the President, who desires her to thank Mr. Twain for her information, and to say to him that Captain Mason will not be disturbed in the Frankfort Consulate. The President also desires Miss Cleveland to say that if Mr. Twain knows of any other cases of this kind he will be greatly obliged if he will write him concerning them at his earliest convenience.

Clemens immensely admired Grover Cleveland, also his young wife, and his visits to Washington were not infrequent. Mrs. Clemens was not always able to accompany him, and he has told us how once (it was his first visit after the President's marriage) she put a little note in the pocket of his evening waistcoat, which he would be sure to find when dressing, warning him about his deportment.

Being presented to Mrs. Cleveland, he handed her a card on which he had written "He didn't," and asked her to sign her name below those words. Mrs. Cleveland protested that she couldn't sign it unless she knew what it was he hadn't done; but he insisted, and she promised to sign if he would tell her immediately afterward all about it. She signed, and he handed her Mrs. Clemens's note, which was very brief. It said:

"Don't wear your arctics in the White House."

Mrs. Cleveland summoned a messenger and had the card she had signed mailed at once to Mrs. Clemens at Hartford.

He was not always so well provided against disaster. Once, without consulting his engagements, he agreed to assist Mrs. Cleveland at a dedication, only to find that he must write an apology later. In his letter he said:

> I do not know how it is in the White House, but in this house of ours whenever the minor half of the administration tries to run itself without the help of the major half it gets aground.

He explained his position, and added:

> I suppose the President often acts just like that; goes and makes an impossible promise, and you never find it out until it is next to impossible to break it up and set things straight again. Well, that is just our way exactly—one-half the administration always busy getting the family into trouble and the other half busy getting it out.

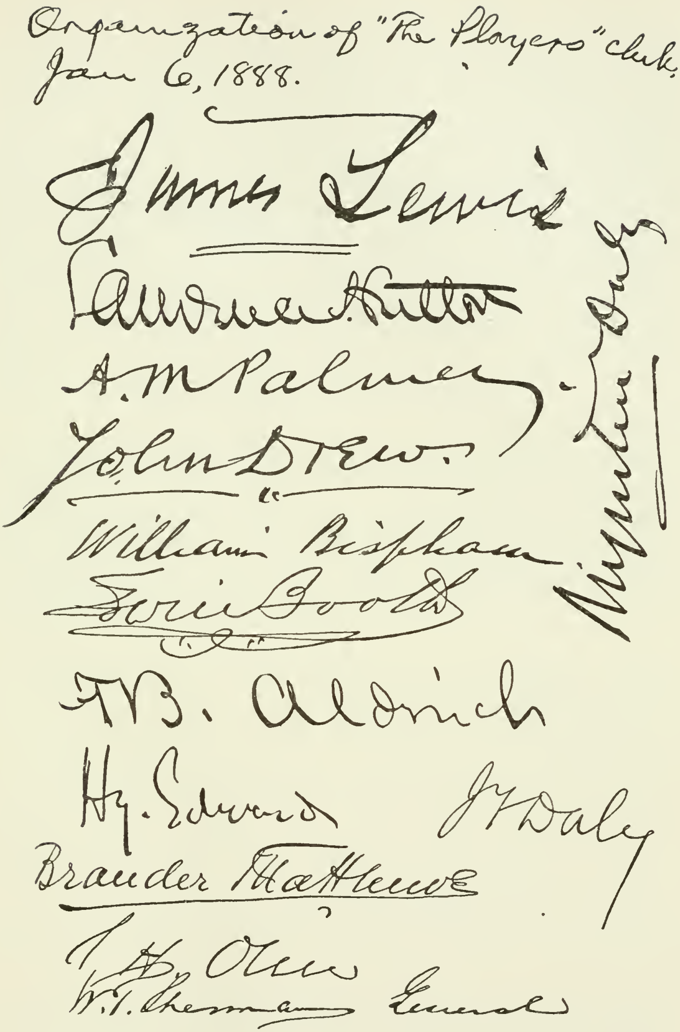
CLXVI

A "PLAYER" AND A MASTER OF ARTS

ONE morning early in January Clemens received the following note:

> DALY'S THEATER, NEW YORK, *January 2, 1888.*
>
> Mr. Augustin Daly will be very much pleased to have Mr. S. L. Clemens meet Mr. Booth, Mr. Barrett, and Mr. Palmer and a few friends at lunch on Friday next, January 6th (at one o'clock in Delmonico's), to discuss the formation of a new club which it is thought will claim your (*sic*) interest.
>
> *R. S. V. P.*

There were already in New York a variety of literary and artistic societies, such as The Kinsmen and Tile clubs, with which Clemens was more or less associated. It was proposed now to form a more comprehensive and pretentious organization—one that would include the various associated arts. The conception of this new club, which was to be called The Players, had grown out of a desire on the part of Edwin Booth to confer some enduring benefit upon the members of his profession. It had been discussed during a summer cruise on Mr. E. C. Benedict's steam-yacht by a little party which, besides the owner, consisted of Booth himself, Aldrich, Lawrence Barrett, William Bispham, and Laurence Hutton. Booth's original idea had been to endow some sort of an actors' home, but after due consideration this did not appear to be the best plan. Some one proposed a club, and Aldrich, with never-failing inspiration, suggested its name, The Players,



Organization of "The Players" club.
Jan 6, 1888.

James Lewis

Laurence Hutton

A. M. Palmer

John Drew

William Bispham

Edwin Booth

T. B. Aldrich

Augustin Daly

Hy. Edwards

J. F. Daly

Brander Matthews

S. H. Olin

W. T. Sherman General

REVERSE SIDE OF MARK TWAIN'S MENU CARD OF THE DALY LUNCHEON AT WHICH "THE PLAYERS" WAS FORMED
Mr. Clemens himself failed to sign it but wrote the line at the top.

which immediately impressed Booth and the others. It was then decided that members of all the kindred arts should be admitted, and this was the plan discussed and perfected at the Daly luncheon. The guests became charter members, and The Players became an incorporated fact early in January, 1888.[1] Booth purchased the fine old brownstone residence at 16 Gramercy Park, and had expensive alterations made under the directions of Stanford White to adapt it for club purposes. He bore the entire cost, furnished it from garret to cellar, gave it his books and pictures, his rare collections of every sort. Laurence Hutton, writing of it afterward, said:

> And on the first Founder's Night, the 31st of December, 1888, he transferred it all to the association, a munificent gift, absolutely without parallel in its way. The pleasure it gave to Booth during the few remaining years of his life was very great. He made it his home. Next to his own immediate family it was his chief interest, care, and consolation. He nursed and petted it, as it nursed and petted and honored him. He died in it. And it is certainly his greatest monument.

There is no other club quite like The Players. The personality of Edwin Booth pervades it, and there is a spirit in its atmosphere not found in other large clubs—a spirit of unity, and ancient friendship, and mellowness which usually come only of small membership and long establishment. Mark Twain was always fond of The Players, and more than once made it his home. It is a true home, and its members are a genuine brotherhood.

It was in June, 1888, that Yale College conferred upon Samuel Clemens the degree of Master of Arts. It was his first honor of this kind, and he was proud of it. To Charles Hopkins ("Charley") Clark, who had been appointed to apprise him of the honor, he wrote:

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[1] Besides Mr. Booth himself, the charter members were: Lawrence Barrett, William Bispham, Samuel L. Clemens, Augustin Daly, Joseph F. Daly, John Drew, Henry Edwards, Laurence Hutton, Joseph Jefferson, John A. Lane, James Lewis, Brander Matthews, Stephen H. Olin, A. M. Palmer, and William T. Sherman.

> I felt mighty proud of that degree; in fact I could squeeze the truth a little closer and say vain of it. And why shouldn't I be? I am the only literary animal of my particular subspecies who has ever been given a degree by any college in any age of the world as far as I know.

To which Clark answered:

> My dear Friend,—You are "the only literary animal of your particular subspecies" in existence, and you've no cause for humility in the fact. Yale has done herself at least as much credit as she has done you, and "don't you forget it."
>
> C. H. C.

Clemens could not attend the alumni dinner, being at Elmira and unable to get away, but in an address he made at Yale College later in the year he thus freely expressed himself:

> I was sincerely proud and grateful to be made a Master of Arts by this great and venerable University, and I would have come last June to testify this feeling, as I do now testify it, but that the sudden and unexpected notice of the honor done me found me at a distance from home and unable to discharge that duty and enjoy that privilege.
>
> Along at first, say for the first month or so, I did not quite know how to proceed because of my not knowing just what authorities and privileges belonged to the title which had been granted me, but after that I consulted some students of Trinity —in Hartford—and they made everything clear to me. It was through them that I found out that my title made me head of the Governing Body of the University, and lodged in me very broad and severely responsible powers.
>
> I was told that it would be necessary to report to you at this time, and of course I comply, though I would have preferred to put it off till I could make a better showing; for indeed I have

been so pertinaciously hindered and obstructed at every turn by the faculty that it would be difficult to prove that the University is really in any better shape now than it was when I first took charge. By advice, I turned my earliest attention to the Greek department. I told the Greek professor I had concluded to drop the use of Greek-written character because it is so hard to spell with, and so impossible to read after you get it spelt. Let us draw the curtain there. I saw by what followed that nothing but early neglect saved him from being a very profane man. I ordered the professor of mathematics to simplify the whole system, because the way it was I couldn't understand it, and I didn't want things going on in the college in what was practically a clandestine fashion. I told him to drop the conundrum system; it was not suited to the dignity of a college, which should deal in facts, not guesses and suppositions; we didn't want any more cases of *if* A and B stand at opposite poles of the earth's surface and C at the equator of Jupiter, at what variations of angle will the left limb of the moon appear to these different parties?—I said you just let that thing alone; it's plenty time to get in a sweat about it when it happens; as like as not it ain't going to do any harm, anyway. His reception of these instructions bordered on insubordination, insomuch that I felt obliged to take his number and report him. I found the astronomer of the University gadding around after comets and other such odds and ends—tramps and derelicts of the skies. I told him pretty plainly that we couldn't have that. I told him it was no economy to go on piling up and piling up raw material in the way of new stars and comets and asteroids that we couldn't ever have any use for till we had worked off the old stock. At bottom I don't really mind comets so much, but somehow I have always been down on asteroids. There is nothing mature about them; I wouldn't sit up nights the way that man does if I could get a basketful of them. He said it was the best line of goods he had; he said he could trade them to Rochester for comets, and trade the comets to Harvard for nebulæ, and trade the nebulæ to the Smithsonian for flint hatchets. I felt obliged to stop this thing on the spot; I said we couldn't have the University turned into an astronomical junkshop. And while I was at it I thought I might as well make the reform complete; the astronomer is extraordinarily mutinous, and so, with your approval, I will transfer him to the law department and put one of the law students in his place. A boy will be more biddable, more tractable, also cheaper. It is true he cannot be intrusted with important work at first, but he can comb the skies for nebulæ till he gets his hand in. I have other changes in mind, but as they are in the nature of surprises I judge it politic to leave them unspecified at this time.

Very likely it was in this new capacity, as the head of the governing body, that he wrote one morning to Clark advising him as to the misuse of a word in the *Courant*, though he thought it best to sign the communication with the names of certain learned friends, to give it weight with the public, as he afterward explained.

SIR,—The word "patricide" in your issue of this morning (telegrams) was an error. You meant it to describe the slayer of a father; you should have used "parricide" instead. Patricide merely means the killing of an Irishman—any Irishman, male or female.

Respectfully,
J. HAMMOND TRUMBULL.
N. J. BURTON.
J. H. TWICHELL.

CLXVII

NOTES AND LITERARY MATTERS

CLEMENS'S note-books of this time are full of the vexations of his business ventures, figures, suggestions, and a hundred imagined combinations for betterment—these things intermingled with the usual bits of philosophy and reflections, and amusing reminders.

Aldrich's man who painted the fat toads red, and naturalist chasing and trying to catch them.

Man who lost his false teeth over Brooklyn Bridge when he was on his way to propose to a widow.

One believes St.-Simon and Benvenuto and partly believes the Margravine of Bayreuth. There are things in the confession of Rousseau which one must believe.

What is biography? Unadorned romance. What is romance? Adorned biography. Adorn it less and it will be better than it is.

If God is what people say there can be none in the universe so unhappy as he; for he sees unceasingly myriads of his creatures suffering unspeakable miseries, and, besides this, foresees all they are going to suffer during the remainder of their lives. One might well say "as unhappy as God."

In spite of the financial complexities and the drain of the enterprises already in hand he did not fail to conceive others. He was deeply interested in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* at the moment, and from photography and scenic effect he presaged a possibility to-day realized in the moving picture.

Dress up some good actors as Apollyon, Greatheart, etc., & the other Bunyan characters, take them to a wild gorge and photograph them—Valley of the Shadow of Death; to other effective places & photo them along with the scenery; to Paris, in their curious costumes, place them near the Arc de l'Étoile & photo them with the crowd—Vanity Fair; to Cairo, Venice, Jerusalem, & other places (twenty interesting cities) & always make them conspicuous in the curious foreign crowds by their costume. Take them to Zululand. It would take two or three years to do the photographing & cost $10,000; but this stereopticon panorama of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* could be exhibited in all countries at the same time & would clear a fortune in a year. By & by I will do this.

If in 1891 I find myself not rich enough to carry out my scheme of buying Christopher Columbus's bones & burying them under the Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World I will give the idea to somebody who *is* rich enough.

Incidentally he did an occasional piece of literary work. Early in the year, with Brander Matthews, he instructed and entertained the public with a copyright controversy in the Princeton *Review*. Matthews would appear to have criticized the English copyright protection, or rather the lack of it, comparing it unfavorably with American conditions. Clemens, who had been amply protected in Great Britain, replied that America was in no position to criticize England; that if American authors suffered in England they had themselves to blame for not taking the proper trouble and precautions required by the English law, that is to say, "previous publication" on English soil. He declared that his own books had been as safe in England as at home since he had undertaken to comply with English requirements, and that Professor Matthews was altogether mistaken, both as to premise and conclusion.

"You are the very wrong-headedest person in America," he said; "and you are injudicious." And of the article: "I read it to the cat—well, I never saw a cat carry on so before. . . . The American author can go to Canada, spend three days there and come home with an English and American copyright as strong as if it had been built out of railroad iron."

Matthews replied that not every one could go to Canada, any more than to Corinth. He said:

"It is not easy for a poor author who may chance to live in Florida or Texas, those noted homes of literature, to go to Canada."

Clemens did not reply again; that is to say, he did not publish his reply. It was a capable bomb which he prepared, well furnished with amusing instance, sarcasm, and ridicule, but he did not use it. Perhaps he was afraid it would destroy his opponent, which would not do. In his heart he loved Matthews. He laid the deadly thing away and maintained a dignified reserve.

Clemens often felt called upon to criticize American institutions, but he was first to come to their defense, especially when the critic was an alien. When Matthew Arnold offered some strictures on America, Clemens covered a good many quires of paper with caustic replies. He even defended American newspapers, which he had himself more than once violently assailed for misreporting him and for other journalistic shortcomings, and he bitterly denounced every shaky British institution, touched upon every weak spot in hereditary rule. He did not print—not then[1]—he was writing mainly for relief—without success, however, for he only kindled the fires of his indignation. He was at Quarry Farm and he plunged into his neglected story—*A Yankee in King Arthur's Court*—and made his astonishing hero the mouthpiece of his doctrines. He worked with an inspiration and energy born of his ferocity. To Whitmore, near the end of the summer, he wrote:

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[1] An article on the American press, probably the best of those prepared at this time, was used, in part, in *The American Claimant*, as the paper read before the Mechanics' Club, by "Parker," assistant editor of the *Democrat.*

> I've got 16 working-days left yet, and in that time I will add another 120,000 words to my book if I have luck.

In his memoranda of this time he says:

> There was never a throne which did not represent a crime. There is no throne to-day which does not represent a crime. . . .
>
> Show me a lord and I will show you a man whom you couldn't tell from a journeyman shoemaker if he were stripped, and who, in all that is worth being, is the shoemaker's inferior; and in the shoemaker I will show you a dull animal, a poor-spirited insect; for there are enough of him to rise and chuck the lords and royalties into the sea where they belong, and he doesn't do it.

But his violence waned, maybe, for he did not finish the *Yankee* in the sixteen days as planned. He brought the manuscript back to Hartford, but found it hard work there, owing to many interruptions. He went over to Twichell's and asked for a room where he might work in seclusion. They gave him a big upper chamber, but some repairs were going on below. From a letter written to Theodore Crane we gather that it was not altogether quiet.

> *Friday, October 5, 1888.*
>
> DEAR THEO,—I am here in Twichell's house at work, with the noise of the children and an army of carpenters to help. Of course they don't help, but neither do they hinder. It's like a boiler factory for racket, and in nailing a wooden ceiling on to the room under me the hammering tickles my feet amazingly sometimes and jars my table a good deal, but I never am conscious of the racket at all, and I move my feet into positions of relief without knowing when I do it. I began here Monday morning, and have done eighty pages since. I was so tired last night that I thought I would lie abed and rest to-day; but I couldn't resist. I mean to try to knock off to-morrow, but it's doubtful if I do. I want to finish the day the machine finishes,

and a week ago the closest calculations for that indicated Oct. 22—but experience teaches me that the calculations will miss fire as usual.

The other day the children were projecting a purchase, Livy and I to furnish the money—a dollar and a half. Jean discouraged the idea. She said, "We haven't got any money. Children, if you would think, you would remember the machine isn't done."

It's billiards to-night. I wish you were here.

With love to you both, S. L. C.

P. S.—*I* got it all wrong. It wasn't the children, it was Marie. She wanted a box of blacking for the children's shoes. Jean reproved her and said, "Why, Marie, you mustn't *ask* for things now. The machine isn't done."

Neither the *Yankee* nor the machine was completed that fall, though returns from both were beginning to be badly needed. The financial pinch was not yet severe, but it was noticeable, and it did not relax.

A memorandum of this time tells of an anniversary given to Charles and Susan Warner in their own home. The guests assembled at the Clemens home, the Twichells among them, and slipped across to Warner's, entering through a window. Dinner was then announced to the Warners, who were sitting by their library fire. They came across the hall and opened the dining-room door, to be confronted by a table fully spread and lighted and an array of guests already seated.

CLXVIII

INTRODUCING NYE AND RILEY AND OTHERS

IT was the winter (1888–89) that the Bill Nye and James Whitcomb Riley entertainment combination set out on its travels. Mark Twain introduced them to their first Boston audience. Major J. B. Pond was exploiting Nye and Riley, and Clemens went on to Boston especially to hear them. Pond happened upon him in the lobby of the Parker House and insisted that nothing would do but he must introduce them. In his book of memories which he published later Pond wrote:

> He replied that he believed I was his mortal enemy, and determined that he should never have an evening's enjoyment in my presence. He consented, however, and conducted his brother-humorist and the Hoosier poet to the platform. Mark's presence was a surprise to the audience, and when they recognized him the demonstration was tremendous. The audience rose in a body, and men and women shouted at the very top of their voices. Handkerchiefs waved, the organist even opened every forte key and pedal in the great organ, and the noise went on unabated for minutes. It took some time for the crowd to get down to listening, but when they did subside, as Mark stepped to the front, the silence was as impressive as the noise had been.

He presented the Nye-Riley pair as the Siamese Twins. "I saw them first," he said, "a great many years ago, when Mr. Barnum had them, and they were just fresh from Siam. The ligature was their best hold then, but literature became their best hold later, when one of them committed an indiscretion, and they had to cut the old bond to accommodate the sheriff."

He continued this comic fancy, and the audience was in a proper frame of mind, when he had finished, to welcome the "Twins of Genius" who were to entertain them.

Pond says:

> It was a carnival of fun in every sense of the word. Bostonians will not have another such treat in this generation.

Pond proposed to Clemens a regular tour with Nye and Riley. He wrote:

> I will go partners with you, and I will buy Nye and Riley's time and give an entertainment something like the one we gave in Boston. Let it be announced that you will introduce the "Twins of Genius." Ostensibly a pleasure trip for you. I will take one-third of the profits and you two-thirds. I can tell you it will be the biggest thing that can be brought before the American public.

But Clemens, badly as he was beginning to need the money, put this temptation behind him. His chief diversion these days was in gratuitous appearances. He had made up his mind not to read or lecture again for pay, but he seemed to take a peculiar enjoyment in doing these things as a benefaction. That he was beginning to need the money may have added a zest to the joy of his giving. He did not respond to all invitations; he could have been traveling constantly had he done so. He consulted with Mrs. Clemens and gave himself to the cause that seemed most worthy. In January Col. Richard Malcolm Johnston was billed to give a reading with Thomas Nelson Page in Baltimore. Page's wife fell ill and died, and Colonel Johnston, in extremity, wired Charles Dudley Warner to come in Page's place. Warner, unable to go, handed the invitation to Clemens, who promptly wired that he would come. They read to a packed house, and when the audience was gone and the returns had been counted an equal division of the profits was handed to each of the authors. Clemens pushed his share over to Johnston, saying:

"That's yours, Colonel. I'm not reading for money these days."

Colonel Johnston, to whom the sum was important, tried to thank him, but he only said:

"Never mind, Colonel, it only gave me pleasure to do you that little favor. You can pass it on some day."

As a matter of fact, hard put to it as he was for funds, Clemens at this time regarded himself as a potential multi-millionaire. The type-setting machine which for years had been sapping his financial strength was believed to be perfected, and ship-loads of money were waiting in the offing. However, we shall come to this later.

Clemens read for the cadets at West Point and for a variety of institutions and on many special occasions. He usually gave chapters from his *Yankee*, now soon to be finished, chapters generally beginning with the Yankee's impression of the curious country and its people, ending with the battle of the Sun-belt, when the Yankee and his fifty-four adherents were masters of England, with twenty-five thousand dead men lying about them. He gave this at West Point, including the chapter where the Yankee has organized a West Point of his own in King Arthur's reign.

In April, '89, he made an address at a dinner given to a victorious baseball team returning from a tour of the world by way of the Sandwich Islands. He was on familiar ground there. His heart was in his words. He began:

> I have been in the Sandwich Islands—twenty-three years ago—that peaceful land, that beautiful land, that far-off home of solitude, and soft idleness, and repose, and dreams, where life is one long slumberous Sabbath, the climate one long summer day, and the good that die experience no change, for they but fall asleep in one heaven and wake up in another. And these boys

have played baseball there!—baseball, which is the very symbol, the outward and visible expression, of the drive and push and rush and struggle of the living, tearing, booming nineteenth, the mightiest of all the centuries!

He told of the curious island habits for his hearers' amusement, but at the close the poetry of his memories once more possessed him:

Ah, well, it is refreshment to the jaded, it is water to the thirsty, to look upon men who have so lately breathed the soft air of those Isles of the Blest and had before their eyes the inextinguishable vision of their beauty. No alien land in all the earth has any deep, strong charm for me but that one; no other land could so longingly and so beseechingly haunt me, sleeping and waking, through half a lifetime, as that one has done. Other things leave me, but it abides; other things change, but it remains the same. For me its balmy airs are always blowing, its summer seas flashing in the sun; the pulsing of its surf is in my ear; I can see its garlanded crags, its leaping cascades, its plumy palms drowsing by the shore, its remote summits floating like islands above the cloud-rack; I can feel the spirit of its woody solitudes, I hear the plashing of the brooks; in my nostrils still lives the breath of flowers that perished twenty years ago.

CLXIX

THE COMING OF KIPLING

IT was the summer of 1889 that Mark Twain first met Rudyard Kipling. Kipling was making his tour around the world, a young man wholly unheard of outside of India. He was writing letters home to an Indian journal, *The Pioneer*, and he came to Elmira especially to see Mark Twain. It was night when he arrived, and next morning some one at the hotel directed him to Quarry Farm. In a hired hack he made his way out through the suburbs, among the buzzing planing-mills and sash factories, and toiled up the long, dusty, roasting east hill, only to find that Mark Twain was at General Langdon's, in the city he had just left behind. Mrs. Crane and Susy Clemens were the only ones left at the farm, and they gave him a seat on the veranda and brought him glasses of water or cool milk while he refreshed them with his talk—talk which Mark Twain once said might be likened to footprints, so strong and definite was the impression which it left behind. He gave them his card, on which the address was Allahabad, and Susy preserved it on that account, because to her India was a fairyland, made up of magic, airy architecture, and dark mysteries. Clemens once dictated a memory of Kipling's visit.

Kipling had written upon the card a compliment to me. This gave it an additional value in Susy's eyes, since, as a distinction, it was the next thing to being recognized by a denizen of the moon.

Kipling came down that afternoon and spent a couple of hours with me, and at the end of that time I had surprised him as much as he had surprised me—and the honors were easy. I believed that he knew more than any person I had met before, and I knew that he knew that I knew less than any person he had met before—though he did not say it, and I was not expecting that he would. When he was gone Mrs. Langdon wanted to know about my visitor. I said:

"He is a stranger to me, but he is a most remarkable man—and I am the other one. Between us we cover all knowledge; he knows all that can be known, and I know the rest."

He was a stranger to me and to all the world, and remained so for twelve months, then he became suddenly known, and universally known. From that day to this he has held this unique distinction—that of being the only living person, not head of a nation, whose voice is heard around the world the moment it drops a remark; the only such voice in existence that does not go by slow ship and rail, but always travels first-class—by cable.

About a year after Kipling's visit in Elmira George Warner came into our library one morning in Hartford with a small book in his hand and asked me if I had ever heard of Rudyard Kipling. I said, "No."

He said I would hear of him very soon, and that the noise he was going to make would be loud and continuous. The little book was the *Plain Tales*, and he left it for me to read, saying it was charged with a new and inspiriting fragrance, and would blow a refreshing breath around the world that would revive the nations. A day or two later he brought a copy of the London *World* which had a sketch of Kipling in it, and a mention of the fact that he had traveled in the United States. According to this sketch he had passed through Elmira. This remark, with the additional fact that he hailed from India, attracted my attention—also Susy's. She went to her room and brought his card from its place in the frame of her mirror, and the Quarry Farm visitor stood identified.

Kipling also has left an account of that visit. In his letter recording it he says:

You are a contemptible lot over yonder. Some of you are Commissioners and some are Lieutenant-Governors, and some have the V. C., and a few are privileged to walk about the Mall arm in arm with the Viceroy; but I have seen Mark Twain this golden morning, have shaken his hand and smoked a cigar—no, two cigars—with him, and talked with him for more than two hours! Understand clearly that I do not despise you; indeed, I don't. I am only very sorry for you, from the Viceroy downward.

A big, darkened drawing-room; a huge chair; a man with eyes, a mane of grizzled hair, a brown mustache covering a mouth as delicate as a woman's, a strong, square hand shaking mine, and the slowest, calmest, levelest voice in all the world saying:

"Well, you think you owe me something, and you've come to tell me so. That's what I call squaring a debt handsomely."

"Piff!" from a cob-pipe (I always said that a Missouri meerschaum was the best smoking in the world), and behold! Mark Twain had curled himself up in the big arm-chair, and I was smoking reverently, as befits one in the presence of his superior.

The thing that struck me first was that he was an elderly man; yet, after a minute's thought, I perceived that it was otherwise, and in five minutes, the eyes looking at me, I saw that the gray hair was an accident of the most trivial. He was quite young. I was shaking his hand. I was smoking his cigar, and I was hearing him talk—this man I had learned to love and admire fourteen thousand miles away.

Reading his books, I had striven to get an idea of his personality, and all my preconceived notions were wrong and beneath the reality. Blessed is the man who finds no disillusion when he is brought face to face with a revered writer.

The meeting of those two men made the summer of '89 memorable in later years. But it was recalled sadly, too. Theodore Crane, who had been taken suddenly and dangerously ill the previous autumn, had a recurring attack and died July 3d. It was the first death in the immediate families for more than seventeen years. Mrs. Clemens, remembering that earlier period of sorrow, was depressed with forebodings.

CLXX

"THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER" ON THE STAGE

THERE was an unusual dramatic interest in the Clemens home that autumn. Abby Sage Richardson had dramatized *The Prince and the Pauper*, and Daniel Frohman had secured Elsie Leslie (Lyde) to take the double rôle of the Prince and Tom Canty. The rehearsals were going on, and the Clemens children were naturally a good deal excited over the outcome. Susy Clemens was inspired to write a play of her own—a pretty Greek fancy, called "The Triumph of Music," and when it was given on Thanksgiving night, by herself, with Clara and Jean and Margaret Warner, it was really a lovely performance, and carried one back to the days when emotions were personified, and nymphs haunted the seclusions of Arcady. Clemens was proud of Susy's achievement, and deeply moved by it. He insisted on having the play repeated, and it was given again later in the year.

Pretty Elsie Leslie became a favorite of the Clemens household. She was very young, and when she visited Hartford Jean and she were companions and romped together in the hay-loft. She was also a favorite of William Gillette. One day when Clemens and Gillette were together they decided to give the little girl a surprise—a unique one. They agreed to embroider a pair of slippers for her—to do the work themselves. Writing to her of it, Mark Twain said:

> Either one of us could have thought of a single slipper, but it took both of us to think of two slippers. In fact, one of us

did think of one slipper, and then, quick as a flash, the other of the other one. It shows how wonderful the human mind is. . . .

Gillette embroidered his slipper with astonishing facility and splendor, but I have been a long time pulling through with mine. You see, it was my very first attempt at art, and I couldn't rightly get the hang of it along at first. And then I was so busy that I couldn't get a chance to work at it at home, and they wouldn't let me embroider on the cars; they said it made the other passengers afraid. They didn't like the light that flared into my eye when I had an inspiration. And even the most fair-minded people doubted me when I explained what it was I was making—especially brakemen. Brakemen always swore at it and carried on, the way ignorant people do about art. They wouldn't take my word that it was a slipper; they said they believed it was a snow-shoe that had some kind of disease.

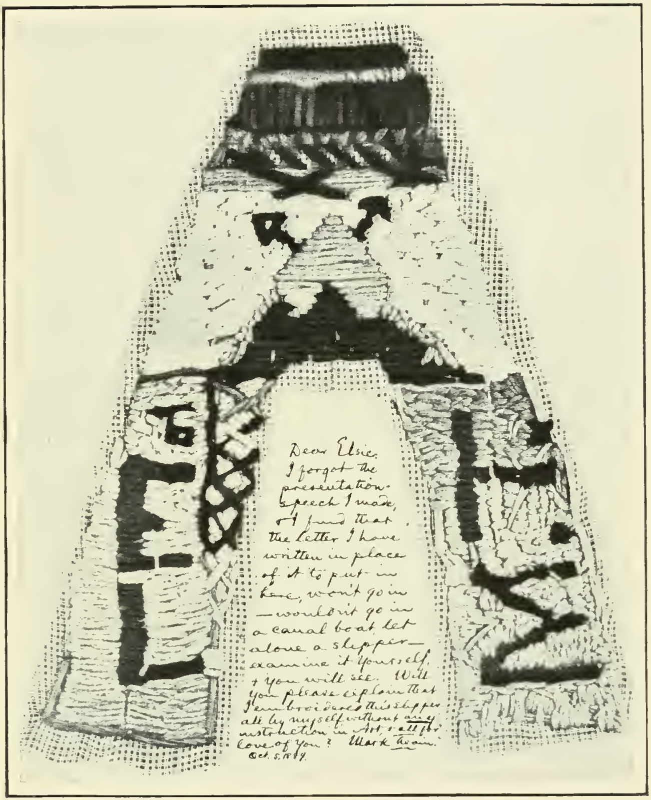
He went on to explain and elucidate the pattern of the slipper, and how Dr. Root had come in and insisted on taking a hand in it, and how beautiful it was to see him sit there and tell Mrs. Clemens what had been happening while they were away during the summer, holding the slipper up toward the end of his nose, imagining the canvas was a "subject" with a scalp-wound, working with a "lovely surgical stitch," never hesitating a moment in his talk except to say "Ouch!" when he stuck himself with the needle.

Take the slippers and wear them next your heart, Elsie dear; for every stitch in them is a testimony of the affection which two of your loyalest friends bear you. Every single stitch cost us blood. I've got twice as many pores in me now as I used to have; and you would never believe how many places you can stick a needle in yourself until you go into the embroidery line and devote yourself to art.

Do not wear these slippers in public, dear; it would only excite envy; and, as like as not, somebody would try to shoot you.

Merely use them to assist you in remembering that among the many, many people who think all the world of you is your friend,

Mark Twain.



Dear Elsie:
I forgot the
presentation-
speech I made,
& I find that
the letter I have
written in place
of it to put in
here, won't go in
—wouldn't go in
a canal boat, let
alone a slipper—
examine it yourself,
& you will see. Will
you please explain that
I embroidered this slipper
all by myself without any
instruction in Art, & all for
love of you? Mark Twain.
Oct. 5, 1889.

By courtesy of *St. Nicholas Magazine*

THE SLIPPER WHICH MARK TWAIN EMBROIDERED FOR ELSIE LESLIE LYDE

The play of "The Prince and the Pauper," dramatized by Mrs. Richardson and arranged for the stage by David Belasco, was produced at the Park Theater, Philadelphia, on Christmas Eve. It was a success, but not a lavish one. The play was well written and staged, and Elsie Leslie was charming enough in her parts, but in the duality lay the difficulty. The strongest scenes in the story had to be omitted when one performer played both Tom Canty and the little Prince. The play came to New York—to the Broadway Theater—and was well received. On the opening night there Mark Twain made a speech, in which he said that the presentation of "The Prince and the Pauper" realized a dream which fifteen years before had possessed him all through a long down-town tramp, amid the crowds and confusion of Broadway. In Elsie Leslie, he said, he had found the embodiment of his dream, and to her he offered homage as the only prince clothed in a divine right which was not rags and sham—the divine right of an inborn supremacy in art.

It seems incredible to-day that, realizing the play's possibilities as Mark Twain did, and as Belasco and Daniel Frohman must have done, they did not complete their partial triumph by finding another child actress to take the part of Tom Canty. Clemens urged and pleaded with them, but perhaps the undertaking seemed too difficult—at all events they did not find the little beggar king. Then legal complications developed. Edward House, to whom Clemens had once given a permission to attempt a dramatization of the play, suddenly appeared with a demand for recognition, backed by a lawsuit against all those who had a proprietary interest in the production. House, with his adopted Japanese daughter Koto, during a period of rheumatism and financial depression, had made a prolonged visit in the Clemens home and originally undertook the dramatization as a sort of return for hospitality. He appears not to have completed it and to have made no arrangement for its production or to have taken any definite step until Mrs. Richardson's play was profitably put on; whereupon his suit and injunction.

By the time a settlement of this claim had been reached the play had run its course, and it was not revived in that form. It was brought out in England, where it was fairly prosperous, though it seems not to have been long continued. Variously reconstructed, it has occasionally been played since, and always, when the parts of Tom Canty and the Prince were separate, with great success. Why this beautiful drama should ever be absent from the boards is one of the unexplainable things. It is a play for all times and seasons, the difficulty of obtaining suitable "twin" interpreters for the characters of the Prince and the Pauper being its only drawback.

CLXXI

"A CONNECTICUT YANKEE IN KING ARTHUR'S COURT"

FROM every point of view it seemed necessary to make the *Yankee in King Arthur's Court* an important and pretentious publication. It was Mark Twain's first book after a silence of five years; it was a book badly needed by his publishing business with which to maintain its prestige and profit; it was a book which was to come out of his maturity and present his deductions, as to humanity at large and kings in particular, to a waiting public. It was determined to spare no expense on the manufacture, also that its illustrations must be of a sort to illuminate and, indeed, to elaborate the text. Clemens had admired some pictures made by Daniel Carter ("Dan") Beard for a Chinese story in the *Cosmopolitan*, and made up his mind that Beard was the man for the *Yankee*. The manuscript was sent to Beard, who met Clemens a little later in the office of Webster & Co. to discuss the matter. Clemens said:

"Mr. Beard, I do not want to subject you to any undue suffering, but I wish you would read the book before you make the pictures."

Beard replied that he had already read it twice.

"Very good," Clemens said; "but I wasn't led to suppose that that was the usual custom among illustrators, judging from some results I have seen. You know," he went on, "this Yankee of mine has neither the refinement nor the weakness of a college education; he is a perfect ignoramus; he is boss of a machine shop; he can build a locomotive or a Colt's revolver, he can put up and run a telegraph line, but he's an ignoramus, nevertheless. I am not going to tell you what to draw. If a man comes to me and says, 'Mr. Clemens, I want you to write me a story,' I'll write it for him; but if he undertakes to tell me what to write I'll say, 'Go hire a typewriter.'"

To Hall a few days later he wrote:

> Tell Beard to obey his own inspirations, and when he sees a picture in his mind put that picture on paper, be it humorous or be it serious. I want his genius to be wholly unhampered. I sha'n't have any fear as to results.

Without going further it is proper to say here that the pictures in the first edition of *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* justified the author's faith in the artist of his selection. They are far and away Dan Beard's best work. The socialism of the text strongly appealed to him. Beard himself had socialistic tendencies, and the work inspired him to his highest flights of fancy and to the acme of his technic. Clemens examined the pictures from time to time, and once was moved to write:

> My pleasure in them is as strong and as fresh as ever. I do not know of any quality they lack. Grace, dignity, poetry, spirit, imagination, these enrich them and make them charming and beautiful; and wherever humor appears it is high and fine—easy, unforced, kept under, masterly, and delicious.

He went on to describe his appreciation in detail, and when the drawings were complete he wrote again:

> Hold me under permanent obligations. What luck it was to find you! There are hundreds of artists who could illustrate any other book of mine, but there was only one who could illustrate this one. Yes, it was a fortunate hour that I went netting for lightning-bugs and caught a meteor. Live forever!

This was not too much praise. Beard realized the last shade of the author's allegorical intent and portrayed it with a hundred accents which the average reader would otherwise be likely to miss.

Clemens submitted his manuscript to Howells and to Stedman, and he read portions of it, at least, to Mrs. Clemens, whose eyes were troubling her so that she could not read for herself. Stedman suggested certain eliminations, but, on the whole, would seem to have approved of the book. Howells was enthusiastic. It appealed to him as it had appealed to Beard. Its sociology and its socialism seemed to him the final word that could be said on those subjects. When he had partly finished it he wrote:

> It's a mighty great book and it makes my heart burn with wrath. It seems that God didn't forget to put a soul in you. He shuts most literary men off with a brain, merely.

A few days later he wrote again:

> The book is glorious—simply noble. What masses of virgin truth never touched in print before!

And when he had finished it:

> Last night I read your last chapter. As Stedman says of the whole book, it's titanic.

Clemens declared, in one of his replies to Howells:

> I'm not writing for those parties who miscall themselves critics, and I don't care to have them paw the book at all. It's my swan song, my retirement from literature permanently, and I wish to pass to the cemetery unclodded. . . . Well, my book is written—let it go, but if it were only to write over again there wouldn't be so many things left out. They burn in me; they keep multiplying and multiplying, but now they can't ever be said; and besides they would require a library—and a pen warmed up in hell.

In another letter of this time to Sylvester Baxter, apropos of the tumbling Brazilian throne, he wrote:

> When our great brethren, the disenslaved Brazilians, frame their declaration of independence I hope they will insert this missing link: "We hold these truths to be self-evident—that all monarchs are usurpers and descendants of usurpers, for the reason that no throne was ever set up in this world by the will, freely exercised, of the only body possessing the legitimate right to set it up—the numerical mass of the nation."

He was full of it, as he had been all along, and *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* is nothing less than a brief for human rights and human privileges. That is what it is, and it is a pity that it should be more than that. It is a pity that he should have been beset by his old demon of the burlesque, and that no one should have had the wisdom or the strength to bring it under control.

There is nothing more charming in any of Mark Twain's work than his introductory chapter, nothing more delightful than the armoring of the Yankee and the outset and the wandering with Alisande. There is nothing more powerful or inspiring than his splendid panoramic picture of the King learning mercy through his own degradation, his daily intercourse with a band of manacled slaves; nothing more fiercely moving than that fearful incident of the woman burned to warm those freezing chattels, or than the great gallows scene, where the priest speaks for the young mother about to pay the death penalty for having stolen a halfpenny's worth, that her baby might have bread. Such things as these must save the book from oblivion; but alas! its greater appeal is marred almost to ruin by coarse and extravagant burlesque, which destroys illusion and antagonizes the reader often at the very moment when the tale should fill him with a holy fire of a righteous wrath against wrong. As an example of Mark Twain at his literary worst and best the *Yankee* ranks supreme. It is unnecessary to quote examples; one cannot pick up the volume and read ten pages of it, or five pages, without finding them. In the midst of some exalted passage, some towering sublimity, you are brought suddenly to earth with a phrase which wholly destroys the illusion and the diviner purpose. Howells must have observed these things, or was he so dazzled by the splendor of its intent, its righteous charge upon the ranks of oppression, that he regarded its offenses against art as unimportant. This is hard to explain, for the very thing that would sustain such a great message and make it permanent would be the care, the restraint, the artistic worthiness of its construction. One must believe in a story like that to be convinced of its logic. To lose faith in it—in its narrative—is absolutely fatal to its purpose. The *Yankee in King Arthur's Court* not only offended the English nation, but much of it offended the better taste of Mark Twain's own countrymen, and in time it must have offended even Mark Twain himself. Reading it, one can visualize the author as a careering charger, with a bit in his teeth, trampling the poetry and the tradition of the romantic days, the very things which he himself in his happier moods cared for most. Howells likened him to Cervantes, laughing Spain's chivalry away. The comparison was hardly justified. It was proper enough to laugh chivalry out of court when it was a reality; but Mark Twain, who loved Sir Thomas Malory to the end of his days, the beauty and poetry of his chronicles; who had written *The Prince and the Pauper*, and would one day write that divine tale of the Maid of Orleans; who was himself no more nor less than a knight always ready to redress wrong, would seem to have been the last person to wish to laugh it out of romance.

And yet, when all is said, one may still agree with Howells in ranking the *Yankee* among Mark Twain's highest achievements in the way of "a greatly imagined and symmetrically developed tale." It is of that class, beyond doubt. Howells goes further:

> Of all the fanciful schemes in fiction it pleases me most, and I give myself with absolute delight to its notion of a keen East Hartford Yankee finding himself, by a retroactionary spell, at the court of King Arthur of Britain, and becoming part of the sixth century with all the customs and ideas of the nineteenth in him and about him. The field for humanizing satire which this scheme opens is illimitable.

Colossal it certainly is, as Howells and Stedman agreed: colossal in its grotesqueness as in its sublimity. Howells, summarizing Mark Twain's gifts (1901), has written:

> He is apt to burlesque the lighter colloquiality, and it is only in the more serious and most tragical junctures that his people utter themselves with veracious simplicity and dignity. That great, burly fancy of his is always tempting him to the exaggeration which is the condition of so much of his personal humor, but which when it invades the drama spoils the illusion. The illusion renews itself in the great moments, but I wish it could be kept intact in the small, and I blame him that he does not rule his fancy better.

All of which applies precisely to the writing of the *Yankee in King Arthur's Court.* Intended as a fierce heart-cry against human injustice—man's inhumanity to man—as such it will live and find readers; but, more than any other of Mark Twain's pretentious works, it needs editing—trimming by a fond but relentless hand.

CLXXII

THE "YANKEE" IN ENGLAND

THE London publishers of the *Yankee* were keenly anxious to revise the text for their English readers. Clemens wrote that he had already revised the *Yankee* twice, that Stedman had critically read it, and that Mrs. Clemens had made him strike out many passages and soften others. He added that he had read chapters of it in public several times where Englishmen were present and had profited by their suggestions. Then he said:

> Now, mind you, I have taken all this pains because I wanted to say a Yankee mechanic's say against monarchy and its several natural props, and yet make a book which you would be willing to print exactly as it comes to you, without altering a word.
>
> We are spoken of (by Englishmen) as a thin-skinned people. It is you who are thin-skinned. An Englishman may write with the most brutal frankness about any man or institution among us and we republish him without dreaming of altering a line or a word. But England cannot stand that kind of a book written about herself. It is England that is thin-skinned. It causeth me to smile when I read the modifications of my language which have been made in my English editions to fit them for the sensitive English palate.
>
> Now, as I say, I have taken laborious pains to so trim this book of offense that you'll not lack the nerve to print it just as it stands. I am going to get the proofs to you just as early as I can. I want you to read it carefully. If you can publish it without altering a single word, go ahead. Otherwise, please hand it to J. R. Osgood in time for him to have it published at my expense.

> This is important, for the reason that the book was not written for America; it was written for England. So many Englishmen have done their sincerest best to teach us something for our betterment that it seems to me high time that some of us should substantially recognize the good intent by trying to pry up the English nation to a little higher level of manhood in turn.

So the *Yankee* was published in England just as he had written it,[1] and the criticisms were as plentiful as they were frank. It was referred to as a "lamentable failure" and as an "audacious sacrilege" and in terms still less polite. Not all of the English critics were violent. The *Daily Telegraph* gave it something more than a column of careful review, which did not fail to point out the book's sins with a good deal of justice and dignity; but the majority of English papers joined in a sort of objurgatory chorus which, for a time at least, spared neither the author nor his work. Strictures on the *Yankee* extended to his earlier books. After all, Mark Twain's work was not for the cultivated class.

These things must have begun to gravel Clemens a good deal at last, for he wrote to Andrew Lang at considerable length, setting forth his case in general terms—that is to say, his position as an author—inviting Lang to stand as his advocate before the English public. In part he said:

> The critic assumes every time that if a book doesn't meet the cultivated-class standard it isn't valuable . . . The critic has actually imposed upon the world the superstition that a painting by Raphael is more valuable to the civilizations of the earth than is a chromo; and the august opera more than the hurdy-gurdy and the villagers' singing society; and the Latin classics than Kipling's far-reaching bugle-note; and Jonathan Edwards than the Salvation Army. . . . If a critic should start a religion it would not have any object but to convert angels, and they

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[1] The preface was shortened and modified for both the American and English editions. The reader will find it as originally written under Appendix S, at the end of last volume.

> wouldn't need it. It is not that little minority who are already saved that are best worth lifting up, I should think, but the mighty mass of the uncultivated who are underneath! That mass will never see the old masters—that sight is for the few; but the chromo-maker can lift them all one step upward toward appreciation of art; they cannot have the opera, but the hurdy-gurdy and the singing-class lift them a little way toward that far height; they will never know Homer, but the passing rhymester of their day leaves them higher than he found them; they may never even hear of the Latin classics, but they will strike step with Kipling's drum-beat and they will march; for all Jonathan Edwards's help they would die in their slums, but the Salvation Army will beguile some of them to a purer air and a cleaner life. . . . I have never tried, in even one single little instance, to help cultivate the cultivated classes. I was not equipped for it either by native gifts or training. And I never had any ambition in that direction, but always hunted for bigger game—the masses. I have seldom deliberately tried to instruct them, but I have done my best to entertain them, for they can get instruction elsewhere. . . . My audience is dumb; it has no voice in print, and so I cannot know whether I have won its approval or only got its censure.

He closed by asking that Lang urge the critics to adopt a rule recognizing the masses, and to formulate a standard whereby work done for them might be judged. "No voice can reach further than yours in a case of this kind," he said, "or carry greater weight of authority." There was no humor in this letter, and the writer of it was clearly in earnest.

Lang's response was an article published in the *Illustrated London News* on the art of Mark Twain. He began by gently ridiculing hyperculture—the new culture—and ended with a eulogy on *Huck Finn.* It seems worth while, however, to let Andrew Lang speak for himself.

> I have been educated till I nearly dropped; I have lived with the earliest apostles of culture, in the days when Chippendale was first a name to conjure with, and Japanese art came in like

a raging lion, and Ronsard was the favorite poet, and Mr. William Morris was a poet, too, and blue and green were the only wear, and the name of Paradise was Camelot. To be sure, I cannot say that I took all this quite seriously, but "we, too, have played" at it, and know all about it. Generally speaking, I have kept up with culture. I can talk (if desired) about Sainte-Beuve, and Mérimée, and Félicien Rops; I could rhyme "Ballades" when they were "in," and knew what a "*pantoom*" was. . . . And yet I have not culture. My works are but tinkling brass because I have not culture. For culture has got into new regions where I cannot enter, and, what is perhaps worse, I find myself delighting in a great many things which are under the ban of culture.

He confesses that this is a dreadful position; one that makes a man feel like one of those Liberal politicians who are always "sitting on the fence," and who follow their party, if follow it they do, with the reluctant acquiescence of the prophet's donkey. He further confesses that he has tried Hartmann and prefers Plato, that he is shaky about Blake, though stalwart concerning Rudyard Kipling.

This is not the worst of it. Culture has hardly a new idol but I long to hurl things at it. Culture can scarcely burn anything, but I am impelled to sacrifice to that same. I am coming to suspect that the majority of culture's modern disciples are a mere crowd of very slimly educated people who have no natural taste or impulses; who do not really know the best things in literature; who have a feverish desire to admire the newest thing, to follow the latest artistic fashion; who prate about "style," without the faintest acquaintance with the ancient examples of style in Greek, French, or English; who talk about the classics and criticize the classical critics and poets, without being able to read a line of them in the original. Nothing of the natural man is left in these people; their intellectual equipment is made up of ignorant vanity and eager desire for novelty, and a yearning to be in the fashion. Take, for example—and we have been a long time in coming to him—Mark Twain. [Here follow some observations concerning the *Yankee*, which Lang confesses that he has not read, and has abstained from reading because—]. Here Mark Twain is not, and cannot be, at the proper point of view. He has not the knowledge which would enable him to be a sound critic of the ideals of the Middle Ages. An Arthurian Knight in New York or in Washington would find as much to blame, and justly, as a Yankee at Camelot.

Of Mark Twain's work in general he speaks with another conclusion:

> Mark Twain is a benefactor beyond most modern writers, and the cultured who do not laugh are merely to be pitied. But his art is not only that of the maker of the scarce article—mirth. I have no hesitation in saying that Mark Twain is one among the greatest contemporary makers of fiction. . . . I can never forget or be ungrateful for the exquisite pleasure with which I read *Huckleberry Finn* for the first time years ago. I read it again last night, deserting *Kenilworth* for *Huck*. I never laid it down till I had finished it. I perused several passages more than once, and rose from it with a higher opinion of its merits than ever.
>
> What is it that we want in a novel? We want a vivid and original picture of life; we want character naturally displayed in action; and if we get the excitement of adventure into the bargain, and that adventure possible and plausible, I so far differ from the newest school of criticism as to think that we have additional cause for gratitude. If, moreover, there is an unstrained sense of humor in the narrator we have a masterpiece, and *Huckleberry Finn* is nothing less.

He reviews *Huck* sympathetically in detail, and closes:

> There are defects of taste, or passages that to us seem deficient in taste, but the book remains a nearly flawless gem of romance and of humor. The world appreciates it, no doubt, but "cultured critics" are probably unaware of its singular value. The great American novel has escaped the eyes of those who watch to see this new planet swim into their ken. And will Mark Twain never write such another? One is enough for him to live by, and for our gratitude, but not enough for our desire.

In the brief column and a half which it occupies, this comment of Andrew Lang's constitutes as thoughtful and fair an estimate of Mark Twain's work as was ever written.

W. T. Stead, of the *Review of Reviews*, was about the only prominent English editor to approve of the *Yankee* and to exploit its merits. Stead brought down obloquy upon himself by so doing, and his separation from his business partner would seem to have been at least remotely connected with this heresy.

The *Yankee in King Arthur's Court* was dramatized in America by Howard Taylor, one of the *Enterprise* compositors, whom Clemens had known in the old Comstock days. Taylor had become a playwright of considerable success, with a number of well-known actors and actresses starring in his plays. The *Yankee*, however, did not find a manager, or at least it seems not to have reached the point of production.

CLXXIII

A SUMMER AT ONTEORA

WITH the exception of one article—"A Majestic Literary Fossil"[1] —Clemens was writing nothing of importance at this time. This article grew out of a curious old medical work containing absurd prescriptions which, with Theodore Crane, he had often laughed over at the farm. A sequel to *Huckleberry Finn—Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer Among the Indians*—was begun, and a number of its chapters were set in type on the new Paige compositor, which had cost such a gallant sum, and was then thought to be complete. There seems to have been a plan to syndicate the story, but at the end of Chapter IX Huck and Tom had got themselves into a predicament from which it seemed impossible to extricate them, and the plot was suspended for further inspiration, which apparently never came.

Clemens, in fact, was troubled with rheumatism in his arm and shoulder, which made writing difficult. Mrs. Clemens, too, had twinges of the malady. They planned to go abroad for the summer of 1890, to take the waters of some of the German baths, but they were obliged to give up the idea. There were too many business complications; also the health of Clemens's mother had become very feeble. They went to Tannersville, in the Catskills, instead — to the Onteora Club, where Mrs. Candace Wheeler had gathered a congenial colony in a number of picturesque cottages, with a comfortable hotel for the more transient visitor. The Clemenses secured a cottage for the season. Mrs. Mary Mapes Dodge, Laurence Hutton, Carroll Beckwith, the painter; Brander Matthews, Dr. Heber Newton, Mrs. Custer, and Dora Wheeler were among those who welcomed Mark Twain and his family at a generous home-made banquet.

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[1] *Harper's Magazine*, February, 1890. Included in the "Complete Works."

It was the beginning of a happy summer. There was a constant visiting from one cottage to another, with frequet assemblings at the Bear and Fox Inn, their general headquarters. There were pantomimes and charades, in which Mark Twain and his daughters always had star parts. Susy Clemens, who was now eighteen, brilliant and charming, was beginning to rival her father as a leader of entertainment. Her sister Clara gave impersonations of Modjeska and Ada Rehan. When Fourth of July came there were burlesque races, of which Mark Twain was starter, and many of that light-hearted company took part. Sometimes, in the evening, they gathered in one of the cottages and told stories by the firelight, and once he told the story of the Golden Arm, so long remembered, and brought them up with the same old jump at the sudden climax. Brander Matthews remembers that Clemens was obliged frequently to go to New York on business connected with the machine and the publishing, and that during one of these absences a professional entertainer came along, and in the course of his program told a Mark Twain story, at which Mrs. Clemens and the girls laughed without recognizing its authorship. Matthews also remembers Jean, as a little girl of ten, allowed to ride a pony and to go barefoot, to her great delight, full of health and happiness, a favorite of the colony.

Clemens would seem to have forgiven Brander Matthews for his copyright articles, for he walked over to the Matthews cottage one morning and asked to be taught piquet, the card game most in vogue there that season. At odd times he sat to Carroll Beckwith for his portrait, and smoked a cob pipe meantime, so Beckwith painted him in that way.

It was a season that closed sadly. Clemens was called to Keokuk in August, to his mother's bedside, for it was believed that her end was near. She rallied, and he returned to Onteora. But on the 27th of October came the close of that long, active life, and the woman who two generations before had followed John Clemens into the wilderness, and along the path of vicissitude, was borne by her children to Hannibal and laid to rest at his side. She was in her eighty-eighth year.

The Clemens family were back in Hartford by this time, and it was only a little later that Mrs. Clemens was summoned to the death-bed of her own mother, in Elmira. Clemens accompanied her, but Jean being taken suddenly ill he returned to Hartford. Watching by the little girl's bedside on the night of the 27th of November, he wrote Mrs. Clemens a birthday letter, telling of Jean's improved condition and sending other good news and as many loving messages as he could devise. But it proved a sad birthday for Mrs. Clemens, for on that day her mother's gentle and beautiful soul went out from among them. The foreboding she had felt at the passing of Theodore Crane had been justified. She had a dread that the harvest of death was not yet ended. Matters in general were going badly with them, and an anxiety began to grow to get away from America, and so perhaps leave sorrow and ill-luck behind. Clemens, near the end of December, writing to his publishing manager, Hall, said:

> Merry Christmas to you, and I wish to God I could have one myself before I die.

The house was emptier that winter than before, for Susy was at Bryn Mawr. Clemens planned some literary work, but the beginning, after his long idleness, was hard. A diversion was another portrait of himself, this time undertaken by Charles Noel Flagg. Clemens rather enjoyed portrait-sittings. He could talk and smoke, and he could incidentally acquire information. He liked to discuss any man's profession with him, and in his talks with Flagg he made a sincere effort to get that insight which would enable him to appreciate the old masters. Flagg found him a tractable sitter, and a most interesting one. Once he paid him a compliment, then apologized for having said the obvious thing.

"Never mind the apology," said Clemens. "The compliment that helps us on our way is not the one that is shut up in the mind, but the one that is spoken out."

When Flagg's portrait was about completed, Mrs. Clemens and Mrs. Crane came to the studio to look at it. Mrs. Clemens complained only that the necktie was crooked.

"But it's always crooked," said Flagg, "and I have a great fancy for the line it makes."

She straightened it on Clemens himself, but it immediately became crooked again. Clemens said:

"If you were to make that necktie straight people would say, 'Good portrait, but there is something the matter with it. I don't know where it is.'"

The tie was left unchanged.

CLXXIV

THE MACHINE

THE reader may have realized that by the beginning of 1891 Mark Twain's finances were in a critical condition. The publishing business had managed to weather along. It was still profitable, and could have been made much more so if the capital necessary to its growth had not been continuously and relentlessly absorbed by that gigantic vampire of inventions—that remorseless Frankenstein monster—the machine.

The beginning of this vast tragedy (for it was no less than that) dated as far back as 1880, when Clemens one day had taken a minor and purely speculative interest in patent rights, which was to do away with setting type by hand. In some memoranda which he made more than ten years later, when the catastrophe was still a little longer postponed, he gave some account of the matter.

> This episode has now spread itself over more than one-fifth of my life, a considerable stretch of time, as I am now 55 years old.
>
> Ten or eleven years ago Dwight Buell, a jeweler, called at our house and was shown up to the billiard-room—which was my study; and the game got more study than the other sciences. He wanted me to take some stock in a type-setting machine. He said it was at the Colt's Arms factory, and was about finished. I took $2,000 of the stock. I was always taking little chances like that, and almost always losing by it, too. Some time afterward I was invited to go down to the factory and see the machine. I went, promising myself nothing, for I knew all

about type-setting by practical experience, and held the settled and solidified opinion that a successful type-setting machine was an impossibility, for the reason that a machine cannot be made to *think*, and the thing that sets movable type *must* think or retire defeated. So, the performance I witnessed did most thoroughly amaze me. Here was a machine that was really setting type, and doing it with swiftness and accuracy, too. Moreover, it was distributing its case at the same time. The distribution was automatic; the machine fed itself from a galley of dead matter and without human help or suggestion, for it began its work of its own accord when the type channels needed filling, and stopped of its own accord when they were full enough. The machine was almost a complete compositor; it lacked but one feature—it did not "justify" the lines. This was done by the operator's assistant.

I saw the operator set at the rate of 3,000 ems an hour, which, counting distribution, was but little short of four casemen's work. William Hamersley was there. He said he was already a considerable owner, and was going to take as much more of the stock as he could afford. Wherefore, I set down my name for an additional $3,000. It is here that the music begins.

It was the so-called Farnham machine that he saw, invented by James W. Paige, and if they had placed it on the market then, without waiting for the inventor to devise improvements, the story might have been a different one. But Paige was never content short of absolute perfection—a machine that was not only partly human, but entirely so. Clemens used to say later that the Paige type-setter would do everything that a human being could do except drink and swear and go on a strike. He might properly have omitted the last item, but of that—later. Paige was a small, bright-eyed, alert, smartly dressed man, with a crystal-clear mind, but a dreamer and a visionary. Clemens says of him: "He is a poet; a most great and genuine poet, whose sublime creations are written in steel."

It is easy to see now that Mark Twain and Paige did not make a good business combination. When Paige declared that, wonderful as the machine was, he could do vastly greater things with it, make it worth many more and much larger fortunes by adding this attachment and that, Clemens was just the man to enter into his dreams and to furnish the money to realize them. Paige did not require much money at first, and on the capital already invested he tinkered along with his improvements for something like four or five years; Hamersley and Clemens meantime capitalizing the company and getting ready to place the perfected invention on the market. By the time the Grant episode had ended Clemens had no reason to believe but that incalculable wealth lay just ahead, when the newspapers should be apprised of the fact that their types were no longer to be set by hand. Several contracts had been made with Paige, and several new attachments had been added to the machine. It seemed to require only one thing more, the justifier, which would save the labor of the extra man. Paige could be satisfied with nothing short of that, even though the extra man's wage was unimportant. He must have his machine *do it all*, and meantime five precious years had slipped away. Clemens, in his memoranda, says:

> *End of* 1885. Paige arrives at my house unheralded. I had seen little or nothing of him for a year or two. He said:
>
> "What will you complete the machine for?"
>
> "What will it cost?"
>
> "Twenty thousand dollars; certainly not over $30,000."
>
> "What will you give?"
>
> "I'll give you half."

Clemens was "flush" at this time. His reading tour with Cable, the great sale of *Huck Finn*, the prospect of the Grant book, were rosy realities. He said:

> "I'll do it, but the limit must be $30,000."

They agreed to allow Hamersley a tenth interest for the money he had already invested and for legal advice.

Hamersley consented readily enough, and when in February, 1886, the new contract was drawn they believed themselves heir to the millions of the Fourth Estate.

By this time F. G. Whitmore had come into Clemens's business affairs, and he did not altogether approve of the new contract. Among other things, it required that Clemens should not only complete the machine, but promote it, capitalize it commercially. Whitmore said:

"Mr. Clemens, that clause can bankrupt you."

Clemens answered: "Never mind that, Whitmore; I've considered that. I can get a thousand men worth a million apiece to go in with me if I can get a perfect machine."

He immediately began to calculate the number of millions he would be worth presently when the machine was completed and announced to the waiting world. He covered pages with figures that never ran short of millions, and frequently approached the billion mark. Colonel Sellers in his happiest moments never dreamed more lavishly. He obtained a list of all the newspapers in the United States and in Europe, and he counted up the machines that would be required by each. To his nephew, Sam Moffett, visiting him one day, he declared that it would take ten men to count the profits from the typesetter. He realized clearly enough that a machine which would set and distribute type and do the work of half a dozen men or more would revolutionize type composition. The fact that other inventors besides Paige were working quite as diligently and perhaps toward more simple conclusions did not disturb him. Rumors came of the Rogers machine and the Thorne machine and the Mergenthaler linotype, but Mark Twain only smiled. When the promoters of the Mergenthaler offered to exchange half their interests for a half interest in the Paige patent, to obtain thereby a wider insurance of success, it only confirmed his trust, and he let the golden opportunity go by.

Clemens thinks the thirty thousand dollars lasted about a year. Then Paige confessed that the machine was still incomplete, but he said that four thousand dollars more would finish it, and that with ten thousand dollars he could finish it and give a big exhibition in New York. He had discarded the old machine altogether, it seems, and at Pratt & Whitney's shops was building a new one from the ground up—a machine of twenty thousand minutely exact parts, each of which must be made by expert hand workmanship after elaborate drawings and patterns even more expensive. It was an undertaking for a millionaire.

Paige offered to borrow from Clemens the amount needed, offering the machine as security. Clemens supplied the four thousand dollars, and continued to advance money from time to time at the rate of three to four thousand dollars a month, until he had something like eighty thousand dollars invested, with the machine still unfinished. This would be early in 1888, by which time other machines had reached a state of completion and were being placed on the market. The Mergenthaler, in particular, was attracting wide attention. Paige laughed at it, and Clemens, too, regarded it as a joke. The moment their machine was complete all other machines would disappear. Even the fact that the *Tribune* had ordered twenty-three of the linotypes, and other journals were only waiting to see the paper in its new dress before ordering, did not disturb them. Those linotypes would all go into the scrap-heap presently. It was too bad people would waste their money so. In January, 1888, Paige promised that the machine would be done by the 1st of April. On the 1st of April he promised it for September, but in October he acknowledged there were still eighty-five days' work to be done on it. In November Clemens wrote to Orion:

> The machine is apparently almost done—*but* I take no privileges on that account; it must *be* done before I spend a cent that can be avoided. I have kept this family on very short commons

for two years and they must go on scrimping until the machine is finished, no matter how long that may be.

By the end of '88 the income from the books and the business and Mrs. Clemens's Elmira investments no longer satisfied the demands of the type-setter, in addition to the household expense, reduced though the latter was; and Clemens began by selling and hypothecating his marketable securities. The whole household interest by this time centered in the machine. What the Tennessee land had been to John and Jane Clemens and their children, the machine had now become to Samuel Clemens and his family. "When the machine is finished everything will be all right again" afforded the comfort of that long-ago sentence, "When the Tennessee land is sold."

They would have everything they wanted then. Mrs. Clemens planned benefactions, as was her wont. Once she said to her sister:

"How strange it will seem to have unlimited means, to be able to do whatever you want to do, to give whatever you want to give without counting the cost."

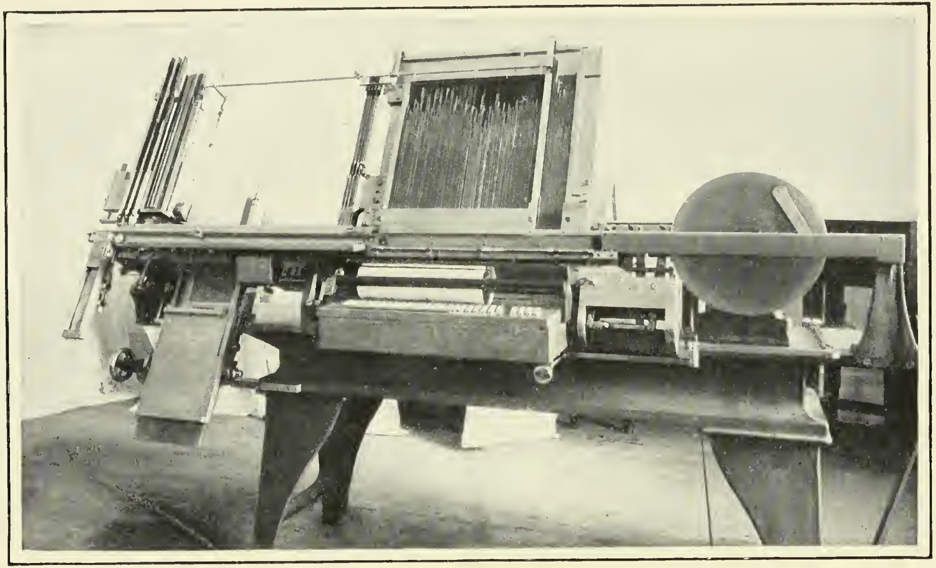
Straight along through another year the three thousand dollars and more a month continued, and then on the 5th of January, 1889, there came what seemed the end—the machine and justifier were complete! In his notebook on that day Mark Twain set down this memorandum:

EUREKA!

Saturday, January 5, 1889—12.20 P.M. At this moment I have seen a line of movable type *spaced and justified by machinery!* This is the first time in the history of the world that this amazing thing has ever been done. Present:

J. W. Paige, the inventor;
Charles Davis ⎫ Mathematical assistants
Earll ⎬ & mechanical
Graham ⎭ experts
Bates, foreman, and S. L. Clemens.

This record is made immediately after the prodigious event.



THE PAIGE TYPESETTER

Two days later he made another note:

> *Monday, January* 7—4.45 P.M. The first proper name ever set by this new keyboard was William Shakspeare. I set it at the above hour; & I perceive, now that I see the name written, that I either mis-spelled it then or I've mis-spelled it now.
>
> The space-bar did its duty by the electric connections & steam & separated the two words preparatory to the reception of the space.

It seemed to him that his troubles were at an end. He wrote overflowing letters, such as long ago he had written about his first mining claims, to Orion and to other members of the family and to friends in America and Europe. One of these letters, written to George Standring, a London printer and publisher, also an author, will serve as an example.

> The machine is finished! An hour and forty minutes ago a line of movable type was spaced and justified by machinery for the first time in the history of the world. And I was there to see.
>
> That was the final function. I had before seen the machine set type, automatically, and distribute type, and automatically distribute its eleven different thicknesses of spaces. So now I have seen the machine, operated by one individual, do the whole thing, and do it a deal better than any man at the case can do it.
>
> This is by far and away the most marvelous invention ever contrived by man. And it is not a thing of rags and patches; it is made of massive steel, and will last a century.
>
> She will do the work of six men, and do it better than any six men that ever stood at a case.
>
> The death-warrant of all other type-setting machines in this world was signed at 12.20 this afternoon, when that first line was shot through this machine and came out perfectly spaced and justified. And automatically, mind you.
>
> There was a speck of invisible dirt on one of those nonpareil types. Well, the machine allowed for that by inserting of its own accord a space which was the 5-1,000 of an inch thinner than

> it would have used if the dirt had been absent. But when I send you the details you will see that that's nothing for this machine to do; you'll see that it knows more and has got more brains than all the printers in the world put together.

His letter to Orion was more technical, also more jubilant. At the end he said:

> All the witnesses made written record of the immense historical birth—the first justification of a line of movable type by machinery—& also set down the hour and the minute. Nobody had drank anything, & yet everybody seemed drunk. Well—dizzy, stupefied, stunned.
>
> All the other wonderful inventions of the human brain sink pretty nearly into commonplaces contrasted with this awful mechanical miracle. Telephones, telegraphs, locomotives, cotton-gins, sewing-machines, Babbage calculators, Jacquard looms, perfecting presses, all mere toys, simplicities! The Paige Compositor marches alone and far in the land of human inventions.

In one paragraph of Orion's letter he refers to the machine as a "cunning devil, knowing more than any man that ever lived." That was a profound truth, though not as he intended it. That creation of James Paige's brain reflected all the ingenuity and elusiveness of its creator, and added something on its own account. It was discovered presently that it had a habit of breaking the types. Paige said it was a trifling thing: he could fix it, but it meant taking down the machine, and that deadly expense of three thousand or four thousand dollars a month for the band of workmen and experts in Pratt & Whitney's machine shops did not cease. In February the machine was again setting and justifying type "to a hair," and Whitmore's son, Fred, was running it at a rate of six thousand ems an hour, a rate of composition hitherto unknown in the history of the world. His speed was increased to eight thousand ems an hour by the end of the year, and the machine was believed to have a capacity of eleven thousand. No type-setter invented to this day could match it for accuracy and precision when it was in perfect order, but its point of perfection was apparently a vanishing point. It would be just reached, when it would suddenly disappear, and Paige would discover other needed corrections. Once, when it was apparently complete as to every detail, and running like a human thing, with such important customers as the New York *Herald* and other great papers ready to place their orders, Paige suddenly discovered that it required some kind of an air-blast, and it was all taken down again and the air-blast, which required months to invent and perfect, was added.

But what is the use of remembering all these bitter details? The steady expense went on through another year, apparently increasing instead of diminishing, until, by the beginning of 1890, Clemens was finding it almost impossible to raise funds to continue the work. Still he struggled on. It was the old mining fascination—"a foot farther into the ledge and we shall strike the vein of gold."

He sent for Joe Goodman to come and help him organize a capital-stock company, in which Senator Jones and John Mackay, old Comstock friends, were to be represented. He never for a moment lost faith in the final outcome, and he believed that if they could build their own factory the delays and imperfections of construction would be avoided. Pratt & Whitney had been obliged to make all the parts by hand. With their own factory the new company would have vast and perfect machinery dedicated entirely to the production of type-setters.

Nothing short of two million dollars capitalization was considered, and Goodman made at least three trips from California to the East and labored with Jones and Mackay all that winter and at intervals during the following year, through which that "cunning devil," the machine, consumed its monthly four thousand dollars—money that was the final gleanings and sweepings of every nook and corner of the strong-box and bank-account and savings of the Clemens family resources. With all of Mark Twain's fame and honors his life at this period was far from an enviable one. It was, in fact, a fevered delirium, often a veritable nightmare.

Reporters who approached him for interviews, little guessing what he was passing through, reported that Mark Twain's success in life had made him crusty and sour.

Goodman remembers that when they were in Washington, conferring with Jones, and had rooms at the Arlington, opening together, often in the night he would awaken to see a light burning in the next room and to hear Mark Twain's voice calling:

"Joe, are you awake?"

"Yes, Mark, what is it?"

"Oh, nothing, only I can't sleep. Won't you talk awhile? I know it's wrong to disturb you, but I am so d—d miserable that I can't help it."

Whereupon he would get up and talk and talk, and pace the floor and curse the delays until he had refreshed himself, and then perhaps wallow in millions until breakfast-time.

Jones and Mackay, deeply interested, were willing to put up a reasonable amount of money, but they were unable to see a profit in investing so large a capital in a plant for constructing the machines.

Clemens prepared estimates showing that the American business alone would earn thirty-five million dollars a year, and the European business twenty million dollars more. These dazzled, but they did not convince the capitalists. Jones was sincerely anxious to see the machine succeed, and made an engagement to come out to see it work, but a day or two before he was to come Paige was seized with an inspiration. The type-setter was all in parts when the day came, and Jones's visit had to be postponed. Goodman wrote that the fatal delay had "sicklied over the bloom" of Jones's original enthusiasm.

Yet Clemens seems never to have been openly violent with Paige. In the memorandum which he completed about this time he wrote:

> Paige and I always meet on effusively affectionate terms, and yet he knows perfectly well that if I had him in a steel trap I would shut out all human succor and watch that trap until he died.

He was grabbing at straws now. He offered a twentieth or a hundredth or a thousandth part of the enterprise for varying sums, ranging from one thousand to one hundred thousand dollars. He tried to capitalize his advance (machine) royalties, and did dispose of a few of these; but when the money came in for them he was beset by doubts as to the final outcome, and though at his wit's ends for further funds, he returned the checks to the friends who had sent them. One five-thousand-dollar check from a friend named Arnot, in Elmira, went back by the next mail. He was willing to sacrifice his own last penny, but he could not take money from those who were blindly backing his judgment only and not their own. He still had faith in Jones, faith which lasted up to the 13th of February, 1891. Then came a final letter, in which Jones said that he had canvassed the situation thoroughly with such men as Mackay, Don Cameron, Whitney, and others, with the result that they would have nothing to do with the machine. Whitney and Cameron, he said, were large stockholders in the Mergenthaler. Jones put it more kindly and more politely than that, and closed by saying that there could be no doubt as to the machine's future—an ambiguous statement. A letter from young Hall came about the same time, urging a heavy increase of capital in the business. *The Library of American Literature*, its leading feature, was handled on the instalment plan. The collections from this source were deferred driblets, while the bills for manufacture and promotion must be paid down in cash. Clemens realized that for the present at least the dream was ended. The family securities were exhausted. The book trade was dull; his book royalties were insufficient even to the demands of the household. He signed further notes to keep business going, left the matter of the machine in abeyance, and turned once more to the trade of authorship. He had spent in the neighborhood of one hundred and ninety thousand dollars on the typesetter—money that would better have been thrown into the Connecticut River, for then the agony had been more quickly over. As it was, it had shadowed many precious years.

CLXXV

"THE CLAIMANT"—LEAVING HARTFORD

FOR the first time in twenty years Mark Twain was altogether dependent on literature. He did not feel mentally unequal to the new problem; in fact, with his added store of experience, he may have felt himself more fully equipped for authorship than ever before. It had been his habit to write within his knowledge and observation. To a correspondent of this time he reviewed his stock in trade:

> . . . I confine myself to life with which I am familiar when pretending to portray life. But I confined myself to the *boy*-life out on the Mississippi because that had a peculiar charm for me, and not because I was not familiar with other phases of life. I was a *soldier* two weeks once in the beginning of the war, and was hunted like a rat the whole time. Familiar? My splendid Kipling himself hasn't a more burnt-in, hard-baked, and unforgetable familiarity with that death-on-the-pale-horse-with-hell-following-after, which is a raw soldier's first fortnight in the field—and which, without any doubt, is the most tremendous fortnight and the vividest he is ever going to see.
>
> Yes, and I have shoveled silver tailings in a quartz-mill a couple of weeks, and acquired the last possibilities of culture in *that* direction. And I've done "pocket-mining" during three months in the one little patch of ground in the whole globe where Nature conceals gold in pockets—or *did* before we robbed all of those pockets and exhausted, obliterated, annihilated the most curious freak Nature ever indulged in. There are not thirty men left alive who, being told there was a pocket hidden on the broad slope of a mountain, would know how to go and find it, or have

even the faintest idea of how to set about it; but I am one of the possible 20 or 30 who possess the secret, and I could go and put my hand on that hidden treasure with a most deadly precision.

And I've been a prospector, and know pay rock from poor when I find it—just with a touch of the tongue. And I've been a *silver* miner and know how to dig and shovel and drill and put in a blast. And so I know the mines and the miners interiorly as well as Bret Harte knows them exteriorly.

And I was a newspaper reporter four years in cities, and so saw the inside of many things; and was reporter in a legislature two sessions and the same in Congress one session, and thus learned to know personally three sample bodies of the smallest minds and the selfishest souls and the cowardliest hearts that God makes.

And I was some years a Mississippi pilot, and familiarly knew all the different kinds of steamboatmen—a race apart, and not like other folk.

And I was for some years a traveling "jour" printer, and wandered from city to city—and so I know *that* sect familiarly.

And I was a lecturer on the public platform a number of seasons and was a responder to toasts at all the different kinds of banquets—and so I know a great many secrets about audiences—secrets not to be got out of books, but only acquirable by experience.

And I watched over one dear project of mine for years, spent a fortune on it, and failed to make it go—and the history of that would make a large book in which a million men would see themselves as in a mirror; and they would testify and say, Verily, this is not imagination; this fellow has been there—and after would they cast dust upon their heads, cursing and blaspheming.

And I am a publisher, and did pay to one author's widow (General Grant's) the largest copyright checks this world has seen—aggregating more than £80,000 in the first year.

And I have been an author for 20 years and an ass for 55.

Now then: as the most valuable capital or culture or education usable in the building of novels is personal experience I ought to be well equipped for that trade.

I surely have the equipment, a wide culture, and all of it real, none of it artificial, for I don't know anything about books.

This generous bill of literary particulars was fully warranted. Mark Twain's equipment was equal to his occasions. It is true that he was no longer young, and that his health was not perfect, but his resolution and his energy had not waned.

His need was imminent and he lost no time. He dug out from his pigeonholes such materials as he had in stock, selecting a few completed manuscripts for immediate disposal—among them his old article entitled, "Mental Telegraphy," written in 1878, when he had hesitated to offer it, in the fear that it would not be accepted by the public otherwise than as a joke. He added to it now a supplement and sent it to Mr. Alden, of *Harper's Magazine*. Psychic interest had progressed in twelve years; also Mark Twain had come to be rather more seriously regarded. The article was accepted promptly.[1] The old sketch, "Luck," also found its way to *Harper's Magazine*, and other manuscripts were looked over and furbished up with a view to their disposal. Even the history game was dragged from the dust of its retirement, and Hall was instructed to investigate its chance of profit.

Then Mark Twain went to work in earnest. Within a week after the collapse of the Jones bubble he was hard at work on a new book—the transmigration of the old "Claimant" play into a novel.

Ever since the appearance of the *Yankee* there had been what was evidently a concerted movement to induce him to write a novel with the theories of Henry George as the central idea. Letters from every direction had urged him to undertake such a story, and these had suggested a more serious purpose for the *Claimant* book. A motif in which there is a young lord who renounces his heritage and class to come to America and labor with his hands; who attends socialistic meetings at which men inspired by readings of *Progress and Poverty* and *Looking Backward* address their brothers of toil, could have in it something worth while. Clemens inserted portions of some of his discarded essays in these addresses, and had he developed this element further, and abandoned Colonel Sellers's materialization lunacies to the oblivion they had earned, the result might have been more fortunate.

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[1] The publication of this article created a good deal of a stir and resulted in the first general recognition of what later became known as Telepathy. A good many readers insisted on regarding the whole matter as one of Mark Twain's jokes, but its serious acceptance was much wider.

But his faith in the new Sellers had never died, and the temptation to use scenes from the abandoned play proved to be too strong to be resisted. The result was incongruous enough. The author, however, admired it amazingly at the time. He sent Howells stirring reports of his progress. He wrote Hall that the book would be ready soon and that there must be seventy-five thousand orders by the date of issue, "not a single one short of that." Then suddenly, at the end of February, the rheumatism came back into his shoulder and right arm and he could hardly hold the pen. He conceived the idea of dictating into a phonograph, and wrote Howells to test this invention and find out as to terms for three months, with cylinders enough to carry one hundred and seventy-five thousand words.

> I don't want to erase any of them. My right arm is nearly disabled by rheumatism, but I am bound to write this book (and sell 100,000 copies of it—no, I mean 1,000,000—next fall). I feel sure I can dictate the book into a phonograph if I don't have to yell. I write 2,000 words a day. I think I can dictate twice as many.
>
> But mind, if this is going to be too much trouble to you—go ahead and do it all the same.

Howells replied encouragingly. He had talked a letter into a phonograph and the phonograph man had talked his answer into it, after which the cylinder had been taken to a typewriter in the next room and correctly written out. If a man had the "cheek" to dictate his story into a phonograph, Howells said, all the rest seemed perfectly easy.

Clemens ordered a phonograph and gave it a pretty fair trial. It was only a partial success. He said he couldn't write literature with it because it hadn't any ideas or gift for elaboration, but was just as matter-of-fact, compressive and unresponsive, grave and unsmiling as the devil—a poor audience.

> I filled four dozen cylinders in two sittings, then I found I could have said it about as easy with the pen, and said it a deal better. Then I resigned.

He did not immediately give it up. To relieve his aching arm he alternated the phonograph with the pen, and the work progressed rapidly. Early in May he was arranging for its serial disposition, and it was eventually sold for twelve thousand dollars to the McClure Syndicate, who placed it with a number of papers in America and with the *Idler Magazine* in England. W. M. Laffan, of the *Sun*, an old and tried friend, combined with McClure in the arrangement. Laffan also proposed to join with McClure in paying Mark Twain a thousand dollars each for a series of six European letters. This was toward the end of May, 1891, when Clemens had already decided upon a long European sojourn.

There were several reasons why this was desirable. Neither Clemens nor his wife was in good health. Both of them were troubled with rheumatism, and a council of physicians had agreed that Mrs. Clemens had some disturbance of the heart. The death of Charles L. Webster in April—the fourth death among relatives in two years—had renewed her forebodings. Susy, who had been at Bryn Mawr, had returned far from well. The European baths and the change of travel it was believed would be beneficial to the family health. Furthermore, the maintenance of the Hartford home was far too costly for their present and prospective income. The house with its associations of seventeen incomparable years must be closed. A great period had ended.

They arranged to sail on the 6th of June by the French line.[1] Mrs. Crane was to accompany them, and came over in April to help in breaking the news to the servants. John and Ellen O'Neill (the gardener and his wife) were to remain in charge; places were found for George and Patrick. Katie Leary was retained to accompany the family. It was a sad dissolution.

The day came for departure and the carriage was at the door. Mrs. Clemens did not come immediately. She was looking into the rooms, bidding a kind of silent good-by to the home she had made and to all its memories. Following the others she entered the carriage, and Patrick McAleer drove them together for the last time. They were going on a long journey. They did not guess how long, or that the place would never be home to them again.

[1] On the *Gascogne.*

CLXXVI

A EUROPEAN SUMMER

THEY landed at Havre and went directly to Paris, where they remained about a week. From Paris Clemens wrote to Hall that a deal by which he had hoped to sell out his interest in the type-setter to the Mallorys, of the *Churchman*, had fallen through.

"Therefore," he said, "you will have to modify your instalment system to meet the emergency of a constipated purse; for if you should need to borrow any more money I would not know how or where to raise it."

The Clemens party went to Geneva, then rested for a time at the baths of Aix; from Aix to Bayreuth to attend the Wagner festival, and from Bayreuth to Marienbad for further additions of health. Clemens began writing his newspaper letters at Aix, the first of which consists of observations at that "paradise of rheumatics." This letter is really a careful and faithful description of Aix-les-Bains, with no particular drift of humor in it. He tells how in his own case the baths at first developed plenty of pain, but that the subsequent ones removed almost all of it.

"I've got back the use of my arm the last few days, and I am going away now," he says, and concludes by describing the beautiful drives and scenery about Aix—the pleasures to be found paddling on little Lake Bourget and the happy excursions to Annecy.

> At the end of an hour you come to Annecy and rattle through its old crooked lanes, built solidly up with curious old houses

> that are a dream of the Middle Ages, and presently you come to the main object of your trip—Lake Annecy. It is a revelation. It is a miracle. It brings the tears to a body's eyes. It is so enchanting. That is to say, it affects you just as all other things that you instantly recognize as perfect affect you—perfect music, perfect eloquence, perfect art, perfect joy, perfect grief.

He was getting back into his old descriptive swing, but his dislike for travel was against him, and he found writing the letters hard. From Bayreuth he wrote "At the Shrine of St. Wagner," one of the best descriptions of that great musical festival that has been put into words. He paid full tribute to the performance, also to the Wagner devotion, confessing its genuineness.

> This opera of "Tristan und Isolde" last night broke the hearts of all witnesses who were of the faith, and I know of some, and have heard of many, who could not sleep after it, but cried the night away. I feel strongly out of place here. Sometimes I feel like the one sane person in the community of the mad; sometimes I feel like the one blind man where all others see; the one groping savage in the college of the learned, and always during service I feel like a heretic in heaven.

He tells how he really enjoyed two of the operas, and rejoiced in supposing that his musical regeneration was accomplished and perfected; but alas! he was informed by experts that those particular events were not real music at all. Then he says:

> Well, I ought to have recognized the sign—the old, sure sign that has never failed me in matters of art. Whenever I enjoy anything in art it means that it is mighty poor. The private knowledge of this fact has saved me from going to pieces with enthusiasm in front of many and many a chromo. However, my base instinct does bring me profit sometimes; I was the only man out of 3,200 who got his money back on those two operas.

His third letter was from Marienbad, in Bohemia, another "health-factory," as he calls it, and is of the same general character as those preceding. In his fourth letter he told how he himself took charge of the family fortunes and became courier from Aix to Bayreuth. It is a very delightful letter, most of it, and probably not greatly burlesqued or exaggerated in its details. It is included now in the "Complete Works," as fresh and delightful as ever. They returned to Germany at the end of August, to Nuremberg, which he notes as the "city of exquisite glimpses," and to Heidelberg, where they had their old apartment of thirteen years before, Room 40 at the Schloss Hotel, with its wonderful prospect of wood and hill, and the haze-haunted valley of the Rhine. They remained less than a week in that beautiful place, and then were off for Switzerland, Lucerne, Brienz, Interlaken, finally resting at the Hôtel Beau Rivage, Ouchy, Lausanne, on beautiful Lake Leman.

Clemens had agreed to write six of the newspaper letters, and he had by this time finished five of them, the fifth being dated from Interlaken, its subject, "Switzerland, the Cradle of Liberty." He wrote to Hall that it was his intention to write another book of travel and to take a year or two to collect the material. The *Century* editors were after him for a series after the style of *Innocents Abroad*. He considered this suggestion, but declined by cable, explaining to Hall that he intended to write for serial publication no more than the six newspaper letters. He said:

> To write a book of travel would be less trouble than to write six detached chapters. Each of these letters requires the same variety of treatment and subject that one puts into a book; but in the book each chapter doesn't have to be rounded and complete in itself.

He suggested that the six letters be gathered into a small volume which would contain about thirty-five or forty thousand words, to be sold as low as twenty-five cents, but this idea appears to have been dropped.

At Ouchy Clemens conceived the idea of taking a little trip on his own account, an excursion that would be a rest after the strenuous three months' travel and sight-seeing—one that he could turn into literature. He engaged Joseph Very, a courier used during their earlier European travels, and highly recommended in the *Tramp Abroad*. He sent Joseph over to Lake Bourget to engage a boat and a boatman for a ten days' trip down the river Rhone. For five dollars Joseph bought a safe, flat-bottom craft; also he engaged the owner as pilot. A few days later—September 19—Clemens followed. They stopped overnight on an island in Lake Bourget, and in his notes Clemens tells how he slept in the old castle of Châtillon, in the room where a pope was born. They started on their drift next morning. To Mrs. Clemens, in some good-by memoranda, he said:

> The lake is as smooth as glass; a brilliant sun is shining.
>
> Our boat is so comfortable and shady with its awning.
>
> 11.20. We have crossed the lake and are entering the canal. Shall presently be in the Rhone.
>
> *Noon.* Nearly down to the Rhone, passing the village of Chanaz.
>
> *Sunday*, 3.15 P.M. We have been in the Rhone three hours. It is unimaginably still & reposeful & cool & soft & breezy. No rowing or work of any kind to do—we merely float with the current—we glide noiseless and swift—as fast as a London cab-horse rips along—8 miles an hour—the swiftest current I've ever boated in. We have the entire river to ourselves—nowhere a boat of any kind.

Pleasant it must have been in the warm September days to go swinging down that swift, gray stream which comes racing out of Switzerland into France, fed from a thousand glaciers. He sent almost daily memoranda of his progress. Half-way to Arles he wrote:

> It's too delicious, floating with the swift current under the awning these superb, sunshiny days in deep peace and quietness.

Some of these curious old historical towns strangely persuade me, but it is so lovely afloat that I don't stop, but view them from the outside and sail on. We get abundance of grapes and peaches for next to nothing. My, but that inn was suffocating with garlic where we stayed last night! I had to hold my nose as we went up-stairs or I believe I should have fainted.

Little bit of a room, rude board floor unswept, 2 chairs, unpainted white pine table—*voilà* the furniture! Had a good firm bed, solid as a rock, & you could have brained an ox with the bolster.

These six hours have been entirely delightful. I want to do all the rivers of Europe in an open boat in summer weather.

Still further along he described one of their shore accommodations.

Night caught us yesterday where we had to take quarters in a peasant's house which was occupied by the family and a lot of cows & calves, also several rabbits.[1] The latter had a ball & I was the ballroom; but they were very friendly and didn't bite.

The peasants were mighty kind and hearty & flew around & did their best to make us comfortable. This morning I breakfasted on the shore in the open air with two sociable dogs & a cat. Clean cloth, napkins & table furniture, white sugar, a vast hunk of excellent butter, good bread, first-class coffee with pure milk, fried fish just caught. Wonderful that so much cleanliness should come out of such a phenomenally dirty house.

An hour ago we saw the Falls of the Rhone, a prodigiously rough and dangerous-looking place; shipped a little water, but came to no harm. It was one of the most beautiful pieces of piloting & boat management I ever saw. Our admiral knew his business.

We have had to run ashore for shelter every time it has rained heretofore, but Joseph has been putting in his odd time making a waterproof sun-bonnet for the boat, & now we sail along dry, although we have had many heavy showers this morning.

Here follows a pencil-drawing of the boat and its new awning, and he adds: "I'm on the stern, under the shelter, and out of sight."

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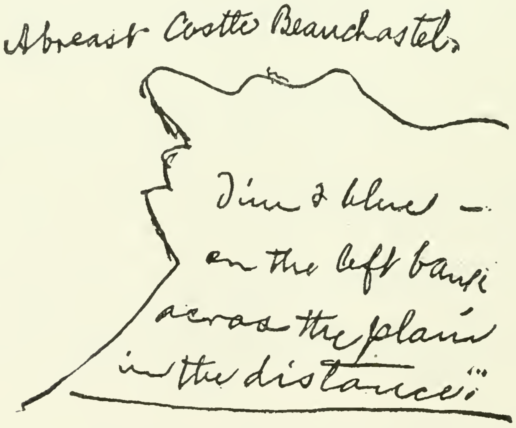
[1] His word for fleas. Neither fleas nor mosquitoes ever bit him —probably because of his steady use of tobacco.

The trip down the Rhone proved more valuable as an outing than as literary material. Clemens covered one hundred and seventy-four pages with his notes of it, then gave it up. Traveling alone with no one but Joseph and the Admiral (former owner of the craft) was reposeful and satisfactory, but it did not inspire literary flights. He tried to rectify the lack of companionship by introducing fictitious characters, such as Uncle Abner, Fargo, and Stavely, a young artist; also Harris, from the *Tramp Abroad;* but Harris was not really there this time, and Mark Twain's genius, given rather to elaboration than to construction, found it too severe a task to imagine a string of adventures without at least the customary ten per cent. of fact to build upon.

It was a day above Avignon that he had an experience worth while. They were abreast of an old castle, nearing a village, one of the huddled jumble of houses of that locality, when, glancing over his left shoulder toward the distant mountain range, he received what he referred to


Abreast Castle Beauchastel.
Dim & blue —
on the left bank
across the plain
in the distance."

THE LOST NAPOLEON: SKETCH IN NOTE-BOOK

later as a soul-stirring shock. Pointing to the outline of the distant range he said to the courier:

"Name it. Who is it?"

The courier said, "Napoleon."

Clemens assented. The Admiral, when questioned, also promptly agreed that the mountain outlined was none other than the reclining figure of the great commander himself. They watched and discussed the phenomenon until they reached the village. Next morning Clemens was up for a first daybreak glimpse of his discovery. Later he reported it to Mrs. Clemens:

> I did so long for you and Sue yesterday morning—the most superb sunrise—the most marvelous sunrise—& I saw it *all*, from the very faintest suspicion of the coming dawn, all the way through to the final explosion of glory. But it had an interest private to itself & not to be found elsewhere in the world; for between me & it, in the far-distant eastward, was a silhouetted mountain range, in which I had discovered, the previous afternoon, a most noble face upturned to the sky, & mighty form outstretched, which I had named Napoleon Dreaming of Universal Empire—& now this prodigious face, soft, rich, blue, spirituelle, asleep, tranquil, reposeful, lay *against* that giant conflagration of ruddy and golden splendors, all rayed like a wheel with the upstreaming & far-reaching lances of the sun. It made one want to cry for delight, it was so supreme in its unimaginable majesty & beauty.

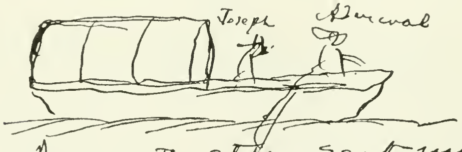
He made a pencil-sketch of the Napoleon head in his note-book, and stated that the apparition could be seen opposite the castle of Beauchastel; but in later years his treacherous memory betrayed him, and, forgetting these identifying marks, he told of it as lying a few hours above Arles, and named it the "Lost Napoleon," because those who set out to find it did not succeed. He even wrote an article upon the subject, in which he urged tourists to take steamer from Arles and make a short trip up-stream, keeping watch on the right-hand bank, with the purpose of rediscovering the natural wonder. Fortunately this sketch was not published. It would have been set down as a practical joke by disappointed travelers. One of Mark Twain's friends, Mr. Theodore Stanton, made a persistent effort to find the Napoleon, but with the wrong directions naturally failed.

It required ten days to float to Arles. Then the current gave out and Clemens ended the excursion and returned to Lausanne by rail. He said:

"It was twenty-eight miles to Marseilles, and somebody would have to row. That would not have been pleasure; it would have meant work for the sailor, and I do not like work even when another person does it."

To Twichell in America he wrote:

> You ought to have been along—I could have made room for you easily, & you would have found that a pedestrian tour in Europe doesn't begin with a raft voyage for hilarity & mild adventure & intimate contact with the unvisited native of the back settlements & extinction from the world and newspapers & a conscience in a state of coma & lazy comfort & solid happiness. In fact, there's *nothing* that's so lovely.
>
> But it's all over. I gave the raft away yesterday at Arles & am loafing along back by short stages on the rail to Ouchy, Lausanne, where the tribe are staying at the Beau Rivage and are well and prosperous.



I'm on the stern seat under shelter & out of sight.

CLXXVII

KÖRNERSTRASSE, 7

THEY had decided to spend the winter in Berlin, and in October Mrs. Clemens and Mrs. Crane, after some previous correspondence with an agent, went up to that city to engage an apartment. The elevator had not reached the European apartment in those days, and it was necessary, on Mrs. Clemens's account, to have a ground floor. The sisters searched a good while without success, and at last reached Körnerstrasse, a short, secluded street, highly recommended by the agent. The apartment they examined in Körnerstrasse was Number 7, and they were so much pleased with the conveniences and comfort of it and so tired that they did not notice closely its general social environment. The agent supplied an assortment of furniture for a consideration, and they were soon settled in the attractive, roomy place. Clemens and the children, arriving somewhat later, expressed themselves as satisfied.

Their contentment was somewhat premature. When they began to go out socially, which was very soon, and friends inquired as to their location, they noticed that the address produced a curious effect. Semi-acquaintances said, "Ah, yes, Körnerstrasse"; acquaintances said, "Dear me, do you like it?" An old friend exclaimed, "Good gracious! How in the world did you ever come to locate there?" Then they began to notice what they had not at first seen. Körnerstrasse was not disreputable, but it certainly was not elegant. There were rag warehouses across the street and women who leaned out the windows to gossip. The street itself was thronged with children. They played on a sand pile and were often noisy and seldom clean. It was eminently not the place for a distinguished man of letters. The family began to be sensitive on the subject of their address.

Clemens, of course, made humor out of it. He wrote a newspaper letter on the subject, a burlesque, naturally, which the family prevailed upon him not to print. But the humiliation is out of it now, and a bit of its humor may be preserved. He takes upon himself the renting of the place, and pictures the tour of inspection with the agent's assistant.

> He was greatly moved when they came to the street and said, softly and lovingly:
>
> "Ah, Körner Street, Körner Street, why did I not think of you before! A place fit for the gods, dear sir. Quiet?—notice how still it is; and remember this is noonday—noonday. It is but one block long, you see, just a sweet, dear little nest hid away here in the heart of the great metropolis, its presence and its sacred quiet unsuspected by the restless crowds that swarm along the stately thoroughfares yonder at its two extremities. And—"
>
> "This building is handsome, but I don't think much of the others. They look pretty commonplace, compared with the rest of Berlin."
>
> "Dear! dear! have you noticed that? It is just an affectation of the nobility. What they want—"
>
> "The nobility? Do they live in—"
>
> "In this street? That is good! very good, indeed! I wish the Duke of Sassafras-Hagenstein could hear you say that. When the Duke first moved in here he—"
>
> "Does he live in this street?"
>
> "Him! Well, I should say so! Do you see the big, plain house over there with the placard in the third-floor window? That's his house."
>
> "The placard that says 'Furnished rooms to let'? Does he keep boarders?"
>
> "What an idea! Him! With a rent-roll of twelve hundred thousand marks a year? Oh, positively this is too good."

"Well, what does he have that sign up for?"

The assistant took me by the buttonhole & said, with a merry light beaming in his eye:

"Why, my dear sir, a person would know you are new to Berlin just by your innocent questions. Our aristocracy, our old, real, genuine aristocracy, are full of the quaintest eccentricities, eccentricities inherited for centuries, eccentricities which they are prouder of than they are of their titles, and that sign-board there is one of them. They all hang them out. And it's regulated by an unwritten law. A baron is entitled to hang out two, a count five, a duke fifteen—"

"Then they are all dukes over on that side, I sup—"

"Every one of them. Now the old Duke of Backofenhofenschwartz—not the present Duke, but the last but one, he—"

"Does he live over the sausage-shop in the cellar?"

"No, the one farther along, where the eighteenth yellow cat is chewing the door-mat—"

"But *all* the yellow cats are chewing the door-mats."

"Yes, but I mean the eighteenth one. Count. No, never mind; there's a lot more come. I'll get you another mark. Let me see—"

They could not remain permanently in Körnerstrasse, but they stuck it out till the end of December—about two months. Then they made such settlement with the agent as they could—that is to say, they paid the rest of their year's rent—and established themselves in a handsome apartment at the Hotel Royal, Unter den Linden. There was no need to be ashamed of this address, for it was one of the best in Berlin.

As for Körnerstrasse, it is cleaner now. It is still not aristocratic, but it is eminently respectable. There is a new post-office that takes in Number 7, where one may post mail and send telegrams and use the *Fernsprecher*—which is to say the telephone—and be politely treated by uniformed officials, who have all heard of Mark Twain, but have no knowledge of his former occupation of their premises.

CLXXVIII

A WINTER IN BERLIN

CLEMENS, meantime, had been trying to establish himself in his work, but his rheumatism racked him occasionally and was always a menace. Closing a letter to Hall, he said:

"I must stop—my arm is howling."

He put in a good deal of time devising publishing schemes, principal among them being a plan for various cheap editions of his books, pamphlets, and such like, to sell for a few cents. These projects appear never to have been really undertaken, Hall very likely fearing that a flood of cheap issues would interfere with the more important trade. It seemed dangerous to trifle with an apparently increasing prosperity, and Clemens was willing enough to agree with this view.

Clemens had still another letter to write for Laffan and McClure, and he made a pretty careful study of Berlin with that end in view. But his arm kept him from any regular work. He made notes, however. Once he wrote:

> The first gospel of all monarchies should be Rebellion; the second should be Rebellion; and the third and all gospels, and the only gospel of any monarchy, should be Rebellion—against Church and State.

And again:

> I wrote a chapter on this language 13 years ago and tried my level best to improve it and simplify it for these people, and this is the result—a word of thirty-nine letters. It merely con-

centrates the alphabet with a shovel. It hurts me to know that that chapter is not in any of their text-books and they don't use it in the university.

Socially, that winter in Berlin was eventful enough. William Walter Phelps, of New Jersey (Clemens had known him in America), was United States minister at the German capital, while at the Emperor's court there was a cousin, Frau von Versen, *née* Clemens, one of the St. Louis family. She had married a young German officer who had risen to the rank of a full general. Mark Twain and his family were welcome guests at all the diplomatic events—often brilliant levees, gatherings of distinguished men and women from every circle of achievement. Labouchère of *Truth* was there, De Blowitz of the *Times*, and authors, ambassadors, and scientists of rank. Clemens became immediately a distinguished figure at these assemblies. His popularity in Germany was openly manifested. At any gathering he was surrounded by a brilliant company, eager to do him honor. He was recognized whenever he appeared on the street, and saluted, though in his notes he says he was sometimes mistaken for the historian Mommsen, whom he resembled in hair and features. His books were displayed for sale everywhere, and a special cheap edition of them was issued at a few cents per copy.

Captain Bingham (later General Bingham, Commissioner of Police in New York City) and John Jackson were attachés of the legation, both of them popular with the public in general, and especially so with the Clemens family. Susy Clemens, writing to her father during a temporary absence, tells of a party at Mrs. Jackson's, and especially refers to Captain Bingham in the most complimentary terms.

"He never left me sitting alone, nor in an awkward situation of any kind, but always came cordially to the rescue. My gratitude toward him was absolutely limitless."

She adds that Mrs. Bingham was very handsome and decidedly the most attractive lady present. Berlin was Susy's first real taste of society, and she was reveling in it. In her letter she refers to Minister Phelps by the rather disrespectful nickname of "Yaas," a term conferred because of his pronounciation of that affirmative. The Clemens children were not entirely happy in the company of the minister. They were fond of him, but he was a great tease. They were quite young enough, but it seemed always to give him delight to make them appear much younger. In the letter above quoted Susy says:

> When I saw Mr. Phelps I put out my hand enthusiastically and said, "Oh, Mr. Phelps, good evening," whereat he drew back and said, so all could hear, "What, you here! why, you're too young. Do you think you know how to behave?" As there were two or three young gentlemen near by to whom I hadn't been introduced I wasn't exactly overjoyed at this greeting.

We may imagine that the nickname "Yaas" had been invented by Susy in secret retaliation, though she was ready enough to forgive him, for he was kindness itself at heart.

In one of his later dictations Clemens related an anecdote concerning a dinner with Phelps, when he (Clemens) had been invited to meet Count S——, a cabinet minister of long and illustrious descent. Clemens, and Phelps too, it seems, felt overshadowed by this ancestry.

> Of course I wanted to let out the fact that I had some ancestors, too; but I did not want to pull them out of their graves by the ears, and I never could seem to get the chance to work them in, in a way that would look sufficiently casual. I suppose Phelps was in the same difficulty. In fact he looked distraught now and then—just as a person looks who wants to uncover an ancestor purely by accident and cannot think of a way that will seem accidental enough. But at last, after dinner, he made a try.

He took us about his drawing-room, showing us the pictures, and finally stopped before a rude and ancient engraving. It was a picture of the court that tried Charles I. There was a pyramid of judges in Puritan slouch hats, and below them three bareheaded secretaries seated at a table. Mr. Phelps put his finger upon one of the three and said, with exulting indifference:

"An ancestor of mine."

I put a finger on a judge and retorted with scathing languidness:

"Ancestor of mine. But it is a small matter. I have others."

Clemens was sincerely fond of Phelps and spent a good deal of time at the legation headquarters. Sometimes he wrote there. An American journalist, Henry W. Fischer, remembers seeing him there several times scribbling on such scraps of paper as came handy, and recalls that on one occasion he delivered an address to a German and English audience on the "Awful German Tongue." This was probably the lecture that brought Clemens to bed with pneumonia. With Mrs. Clemens he had been down to Ilsenburg, in the Hartz Mountains, for a week of change. It was pleasant there, and they would have remained longer but for the Berlin lecture engagement. As it was, they found Berlin very cold and the lecture-room crowded and hot. When the lecture was over they stopped at General von Versen's for a ball, arriving at home about two in the morning. Clemens awoke with a heavy cold and lung congestion. He remained in bed, a very sick man indeed, for the better part of a month. It was unpleasant enough at first, though he rather enjoyed the convalescent period. He could sit up in bed and read and receive occasional callers. Fischer brought him *Memoirs of the Margravine of Bayreuth*, always a favorite.[1] The Emperor sent Frau von

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[1] Clemens was deeply interested in the Margravine, and at one time began a novel with her absorbing history as its theme. He gave it up, probably feeling that the romantic form could add nothing to the Margravine's own story.

Versen with an invitation for him to attend the consecration of some flags in the palace. When she returned, conveying thanks and excuses, his Majesty commanded her to prepare a dinner at her home for Mark Twain and himself and a few special guests, the date to be arranged when Clemens's physician should pronounce him well enough to attend.

Members of the Clemens household were impressed by this royal attention. Little Jean was especially awed. She said:

"I wish I could be in papa's clothes"; then, after reflection, "but that wouldn't be any use. I reckon the Emperor wouldn't recognize me." And a little later, when she had been considering all the notables and nobilities of her father's recent association, she added:

"Why, papa, if it keeps on like this, pretty soon there won't be anybody for you to get acquainted with but God," which Mark Twain decided was not quite as much of a compliment as it had at first seemed.

It was during the period of his convalescence that Clemens prepared his sixth letter for the New York *Sun* and McClure's syndicate, "The German Chicago," a finely descriptive article on Berlin, and German customs and institutions generally. Perhaps the best part of it is where he describes the grand and prolonged celebration which had been given in honor of Professor Virchow's seventieth birthday.[1] He tells how the demonstrations had continued in one form or another day after day, and merged at last into the seventieth birthday of Professor Helmholtz[2]; also how these great affairs finally culminated in a mighty *commers*, or beer-fest, given in their honor by a thousand German students. This letter has been published in Mark Twain's "Complete Works," and is well worth reading to-day. His place had been at the table of the two heroes of the occasion, Virchow and Helmholtz, a place where he could see and hear all that went on; and he was immensely impressed at the honor which Germany paid to her men of science. The climax came when Mommsen unexpectedly entered the room.[1]

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[1] Rudolph Virchow, an eminent German pathologist and anthropologist and scholar; then one of the most prominent figures of the German Reichstag. He died in 1902.

[2] Herman von Helmholtz, an eminent German physicist, one of the most distinguished scientists of the nineteenth century. He died in 1894.

> There seemed to be some signal whereby the students on the platform were made aware that a professor had arrived at the remote door of entrance, for you would see them suddenly rise to their feet, strike an erect military attitude, then draw their swords; the swords of all their brethren standing guard at the innumerable tables would flash from the scabbard and be held aloft—a handsome spectacle. Three clear bugle-notes would ring out, then all these swords would come down with a crash, twice repeated, on the tables and be uplifted and held aloft again; then in the distance you would see the gay uniforms and uplifted swords of a guard of honor clearing the way and conducting the guest down to his place. The songs were stirring, and the immense outpour from young life and young lungs, the crash of swords, and the thunder of the beer-mugs gradually worked a body up to what seemed the last possible summit of excitement. It surely seemed to me that I had reached that summit, that I had reached my limit, and that there was no higher lift devisable for me. When apparently the last eminent guest had long ago taken his place, again those three bugle-blasts rang out, and once more the swords leaped from their scabbards. Who might this late comer be? Nobody was interested to inquire. Still, indolent eyes were turned toward the distant entrance, and we saw the silken gleam and the lifted sword of a guard of honor plowing through the remote

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[1] Theodor Mommsen (1817–1903), an eminent German historian and archeologist, a powerful factor in all liberal movements. From 1874–1895 permanent secretary of the Berlin Royal Academy of Sciences.

crowds. Then we saw that end of the house rising to its feet; saw it rise abreast the advancing guard all along like a wave. This supreme honor had been offered to no one before. There was an excited whisper at our table—"Mommsen!"—and the whole house rose—rose and shouted and stamped and clapped and banged the beer-mugs. Just simply a storm! Then the little man with his long hair and Emersonian face edged his way past us and took his seat. I could have touched him with my hand—Mommsen!—think of it!

This was one of those immense surprises that can happen only a few times in one's life. I was not dreaming of him; he was to me only a giant myth, a world-shadowing specter, not a reality. The surprise of it all can be only comparable to a man's suddenly coming upon Mont Blanc, with its awful form towering into the sky, when he didn't suspect he was in its neighborhood. I would have walked a great many miles to get a sight of him, and here he was, without trouble, or tramp, or cost of any kind. Here he was, clothed in a titanic deceptive modesty which made him look like other men. Here he was, carrying the Roman world and all the Cæsars in his hospitable skull, and doing it as easily as that other luminous vault, the skull of the universe, carries the Milky Way and the constellations.

During his convalescent days, Clemens had plenty of time to reflect and to look out of the window. His notebook preserves some of his reflections. In one place he says:

The Emperor passes in a modest open carriage. Next that happy 12-year-old butcher-boy, all in white apron and turban, standing up & so proud!

How fast they drive—nothing like it but in London. And the horses seem to be of very fine breed, though I am not an expert in horses & do not speak with assurance. I can always tell which is the front end of a horse, but beyond that my art is not above the ordinary.

The "Court Gazette" of a German paper can be covered with a playing-card. In an English paper the movements of titled people take up about three times that room. In the papers of

> Republican France from six to sixteen times as much. There, if a Duke's dog should catch cold in the head they would stop the press to announce it and cry about it. In Germany they respect titles, in England they revere them, in France they adore them. That is, the French newspapers do.
>
> Been taken for Mommsen twice. We have the same hair, but on examination it was found the brains were different.

On February 14th he records that Professor Helmholtz called, but unfortunately leaves no further memorandum of that visit. He was quite recovered by this time, but was still cautioned about going out in the severe weather. In the final entry he says:

> Thirty days sick abed—full of interest—read the debates and get excited over them, though don't *versteh.* By reading keep in a state of excited ignorance, like a blind man in a house afire; flounder around, immensely but unintelligently interested; don't know how I got in and can't find the way out, but I'm having a booming time all to myself.
>
> Don't know what a Schelgesetzentwurf is, but I keep as excited over it and as worried about it as if it was my own child. I simply *live* on the Sch.; it is my daily bread. I wouldn't have the question settled for anything in the world. Especially now that I've lost the öffentliche Militärgericht circus. I read all the debates on that question with a never-failing interest, but all at once they sprung a vote on me a couple of days ago & did something by a vote of 100 to 143, but I couldn't find out what it was.

CLXXIX

A DINNER WITH WILLIAM II.

THE dinner with Emperor William II. at General von Versen's was set for the 20th of February. A few days before, Mark Twain entered in his note-book:

> In that day the Imperial lion and the Democratic lamb shall sit down together, and a little General shall feed them.

Mark Twain was the guest of honor on this occasion, and was seated at the Emperor's right hand. The Emperor's brother, Prince Heinrich, sat opposite; Prince Radolin farther along. Rudolf Lindau, of the Foreign Office, was also present. There were fourteen at the table, all told. In his memorandum made at the time, Clemens gave no account of the dinner beyond the above details, only adding:

> After dinner 6 or 8 officers came in, & all hands adjourned to the big room out of the smoking-room and held a "smoking parliament" after the style of the ancient Potsdam one, till midnight, when the Emperor shook hands and left.

It was not until fourteen years later that Mark Twain related some special matters pertaining to that evening. He may have expanded then somewhat to fill out spaces of his memory, and embroidered them, as was his wont; but that something happened, either in reality or in his imagination, which justified his version of it we may believe. He told it as here given, premising: "This may appear in print after I am dead, but not before.

"From 1891 until day before yesterday I had never mentioned the matter, nor set it down with a pen, nor ever referred to it in any way—not even to my wife, to whom I was accustomed to tell everything that happened to me.

"At the dinner his Majesty chatted briskly and entertainingly along in easy and flowing English, and now and then he interrupted himself to address a remark to me or to some other individual of the guests. When the reply had been delivered he resumed his talk. I noticed that the table etiquette tallied with that which was the law of my house at home when we had guests; that is to say, the guests answered when the host favored them with a remark, and then quieted down and behaved themselves until they got another chance. If I had been in the Emperor's chair and he in mine I should have felt infinitely comfortable and at home, but I was guest now, and consequently felt less at home. From old experience I was familiar with the rules of the game and familiar with their exercise from the high place of host; but I was not familiar with the trammeled and less satisfactory position of guest, therefore I felt a little strange and out of place. But there was no animosity—no, the Emperor was host, therefore, according to my own rule, he had a right to do the talking, and it was my honorable duty to intrude no interruptions or other improvements except upon invitation; and of course it could be my turn some day—some day, on some friendly visit of inspection to America, it might be my pleasure and distinction to have him as guest at my table; then I would give him a rest and a quiet time.

"In one way there was a difference between his table and mine—for instance, atmosphere; the guests stood in awe of him, and naturally they conferred that feeling upon me, for, after all, I am only human, although I regret it. When a guest answered a question he did it with a deferential voice and manner; he did not put any emotion into it, and he did not spin it out, but got it out of his system as quickly as he could, and then looked relieved. The Emperor was used to this atmosphere, and it did not chill his blood; maybe it was an inspiration to him, for he was alert, brilliant, and full of animation; also he was most gracefully and felicitously complimentary to my books — and I will remark here that the happy phrasing of a compliment is one of the rarest of human gifts and the happy delivery of it another. I once mentioned the high compliment which he paid to the book *Old Times on the Mississippi;* but there were others, among them some high praise of my description in *A Tramp Abroad* of certain striking phases of German student life.

"Fifteen or twenty minutes before the dinner ended the Emperor made a remark to me in praise of our generous soldier pensions; then, without pausing, he continued the remark, not speaking to me, but across the table to his brother, Prince Heinrich. The Prince replied, indorsing the Emperor's view of the matter. Then I followed with my own view of it. I said that in the beginning our government's generosity to the soldier was clear in its intent and praiseworthy, since the pensions were conferred upon soldiers who had earned them, soldiers who had been disabled in the war and could no longer earn a livelihood for themselves and their families, but that the pensions decreed and added later lacked the virtue of a clean motive, and had, little by little, degenerated into a wider and wider and more and more offensive system of vote-purchasing, and was now become a source of corruption, which was an unpleasant thing to contemplate and was a danger besides. I think that that was about the substance of my remark; but in any case the remark had a quite definite result, and that is the memorable thing about it—manifestly it made everybody uncomfortable.

I seemed to perceive this quite plainly. I had committed an indiscretion. Possibly it was in violating etiquette by intruding a remark when I had not been invited to make one; possibly it was in taking issue with an opinion promulgated by his Majesty. I do not know which it was, but I quite clearly remember the effect which my act produced—to wit, the Emperor refrained from addressing any remarks to me afterward, and not merely during the brief remainder of the dinner, but afterward in the kneip-room, where beer and cigars and hilarious anecdoting prevailed until about midnight. I am sure that the Emperor's good night was the only thing he said to me in all that time.

"Was this rebuke studied and intentional? I don't know, but I regarded it in that way. I can't be absolutely sure of it because of modifying doubts created afterward by one or two circumstances. For example: the Empress Dowager invited me to her palace, and the reigning Empress invited me to breakfast, and also sent for General von Versen to come to her palace and read to her and her ladies from my books."

It was a personal message from the Emperor that fourteen years later recalled to him this curious circumstance. A gentleman whom Clemens knew went on a diplomatic mission to Germany. Upon being presented to Emperor William, the latter had immediately begun to talk of Mark Twain and his work. He spoke of the description of German student life as the greatest thing of its kind ever written, and of the sketch on the German language as wonderful; then he said:

"Convey to Mr. Clemens my kindest regards, ask him if he remembers that dinner at Von Versen's, and ask him why he didn't do any more talking at that dinner."

It seemed a mysterious message. Clemens thought it might have been meant to convey some sort of an imperial apology; but again it might have meant that Mark

Twain's breach and the Emperor's coolness on that occasion were purely imaginary, and that the Emperor had really expected him to talk far more than he did.

Returning to the Royal Hotel after the Von Versen dinner, Mark Twain received his second high compliment that day on the *Mississippi* book. The *portier*, a tow-headed young German, must have been comparatively new at the hotel; for apparently he had just that day learned that his favorite author, whose books he had long been collecting, was actually present in the flesh. Clemens, all ready to apologize for asking so late an admission, was greeted by the *portier's* round face all sunshine and smiles. The young German then poured out a stream of welcome and compliments and dragged the author to a small bedroom near the front door, where he excitedly pointed out a row of books, German translations of Mark Twain.

"There," he said; "you wrote them. I've found it out. Lieber Gott! I did not know it before, and I ask a million pardons. That one there, *Old Times on the Mississippi*, is the best you ever wrote."

The note-book records only one social event following the Emperor's dinner—a dinner with the secretary of the legation. The note says:

> At the Emperor's dinner black cravats were ordered. To-night I went in a black cravat and everybody else wore white ones. Just my luck.

The Berlin activities came to an end then. He was still physically far from robust, and his doctors peremptorily ordered him to stay indoors or to go to a warmer climate. This was March 1st. Clemens and his wife took Joseph Very, and, leaving the others for the time in Berlin, set out for Mentone, in the south of France.

CLXXX

MANY WANDERINGS

MENTONE was warm and quiet, and Clemens worked when his arm permitted. He was alone there with Mrs. Clemens, and they wandered about a good deal, idling and picture-making, enjoying a sort of belated honeymoon. Clemens wrote to Susy:

> Joseph is gone to Nice to educate himself in kodaking—and to get the pictures mounted which mama thinks she took here; but I noticed she didn't take the plug out, as a rule. When she did she took nine pictures on top of each other—composites.

They remained a month in Mentone, then went over to Pisa, and sent Joseph to bring the rest of the party to Rome. In Rome they spent another month—a period of sight-seeing, enjoyable, but to Clemens pretty profitless.

"I do not expect to be able to write any literature this year," he said in a letter to Hall near the end of April. "The moment I take up my pen my rheumatism returns."

Still he struggled along and managed to pile up a good deal of copy in the course of weeks. From Rome to Florence, at the end of April, and so pleasing was the prospect, and so salubrious the air of that ancient city, that they resolved to engage residence there for the next winter. They inspected accommodations of various kinds, and finally, through Prof. Willard Fiske, were directed to the Villa Viviani, near Settignano, on a hill to the eastward of Florence, with vineyard and olive-grove sloping away to the city lying in a haze—a vision of beauty and peace. They closed the arrangement for Viviani, and about the middle of May went up to Venice for a fortnight of sight-seeing—a break in the travel back to Germany. William Gedney Bunce, the Hartford artist, was in Venice, and Sarah Orne Jewett and other home friends.

From Venice, by way of Lake Como and "a tangled route" (his note-book says) to Lucerne, and so northward to Berlin and on to Bad Nauheim, where they had planned to spend the summer. Clemens for some weeks had contemplated a trip to America, for matters there seemed to demand his personal attention. Summer arrangements for the family being now concluded, he left within the week and set sail on the *Havel* for New York. To Jean he wrote a cheerful good-by letter, more cheerful, we may believe, than he felt.

BREMEN, 7.45 A.M., *June 14, 1892.*

DEAR JEAN CLEMENS,— I am up & shaved & got my clean shirt on & feel mighty fine, & am going down to show off before I put on the rest of my clothes.

Perhaps mama & Mrs. Hague can persuade the Hauswirth to do right; but if he don't you go down & kill his dog.

I wish you would invite the Consul-General and his ladies down to take one of those slim dinners with mama, then he would complain to the Government.

Clemens felt that his presence in America was demanded by two things. Hall's reports continued, as ever, optimistic; but the semi-annual statements were less encouraging. The *Library of Literature* and some of the other books were selling well enough; but the continuous increase of capital required by a business conducted on the instalment plan had steadily added to the firm's liabilities, while the prospect of a general tightening in the money-market made the outlook not a particularly happy one. Clemens thought he might be able to dispose of the *Library* or an interest in it, or even of his share of the business itself, to some one with means sufficient to put it on an easier financial footing. The uncertainties of trade and the burden of increased debt had become a nightmare which interfered with his sleep. It seemed hard enough to earn a living with a crippled arm, without this heavy business care.

The second interest requiring attention was that other old one—the machine. Clemens had left the matter in Paige's hands, and Paige, with persuasive eloquence, had interested Chicago capital to a point where a company had been formed to manufacture the type-setter in that city. Paige reported that he had got several million dollars subscribed for the construction of a factory, and that he had been placed on a salary as a sort of general "consulting omniscient" at five thousand dollars a month. Clemens, who had been negotiating again with the Mallorys for the disposal of his machine royalties, thought it proper to find out just what was going on. He remained in America less than two weeks, during which he made a flying trip to Chicago and found that Paige's company really had a factory started, and proposed to manufacture fifty machines. It was not easy to find out the exact status of this new company, but Clemens at least was hopeful enough of its prospects to call off the negotiations with the Mallorys which had promised considerable cash in hand. He had been able to accomplish nothing material in the publishing situation, but his heart-to-heart talk with Hall for some reason had seemed comforting. The business had been expanding; they would now "concentrate." He returned on the *Lahn*, and he must have been in better health and spirits, for it is said he kept the ship very merry during the passage. He told many extravagantly amusing yarns; so many that a court was convened to try him on the charge of "inordinate and unscientific lying." Many witnesses testified, and his own testimony was so unconvincing that the jury convicted him without leaving the bench. He was sentenced to read aloud from his own works for a considerable period every day until the steamer should reach port. It is said that he faithfully carried out this part of the program, and that the proceeds from the trial and the various readings amounted to something more than six hundred dollars, which was turned over to the Seamen's Fund.

Clemens's arm was really much better, and he put in a good deal of spare time during the trip writing an article on "All Sorts and Conditions of Ships," from Noah's Ark down to the fine new *Havel*, then the latest word in ship-construction. It was an article written in a happy vein and is profitable reading to-day. The description of Columbus as he appeared on the deck of his flag-ship is particularly rich and flowing:

> If the weather was chilly he came up clad from plumed helmet to spurred heel in magnificent plate-armor inlaid with arabesques of gold, having previously warmed it at the galley fire. If the weather was warm he came up in the ordinary sailor toggery of the time—great slouch hat of blue velvet, with a flowing brush of snowy ostrich-plumes, fastened on with a flashing cluster of diamonds and emeralds; gold-embroidered doublet of green velvet, with slashed sleeves exposing undersleeves of crimson satin; deep collar and cuff ruffles of rich, limp lace; trunk hose of pink velvet, with big knee-knots of brocaded yellow ribbon; pearl-tinted silk stockings, clocked and daintily embroidered; lemon-colored buskins of unborn kid, funnel-topped, and drooping low to expose the pretty stockings; deep gauntlets of finest white heretic skin, from the factory of the Holy Inquisition, formerly part of the person of a lady of rank; rapier with sheath crusted with jewels and hanging from a broad baldric upholstered with rubies and sapphires.

CLXXXI

NAUHEIM AND THE PRINCE OF WALES

CLEMENS was able to write pretty steadily that summer in Nauheim and turned off a quantity of copy. He completed several short articles and stories, and began, or at least continued work on, two books—*Tom Sawyer Abroad* and *Those Extraordinary Twins*—the latter being the original form of *Pudd'nhead Wilson.* As early as August 4th he wrote to Hall that he had finished forty thousand words of the "Tom Sawyer" story, and that it was to be offered to some young people's magazine, *Harper's Young People* or *St. Nicholas;* but then he suddenly decided that his narrative method was altogether wrong. To Hall on the 10th he wrote:

> I have dropped that novel I wrote you about because I saw a more effective way of using the main episode—to wit, by telling it through the lips of Huck Finn. So I have started Huck Finn & Tom Sawyer (still 15 years old) & their friend the freed slave Jim around the world in a stray *balloon*, with Huck as narrator, & somewhere after the end of that great voyage he will work in that original episode & then nobody will suspect that a whole book has been written & the globe circumnavigated merely to get that episode in in an effective (& at the same time apparently unintentional) way. I have written 12,000 words of this new narrative, & find that the humor flows as easily as the adventures & surprises—so I shall go along and make a book of from 50,000 to 100,000 words.
>
> It is a story for boys, of course, & I think it will interest any boy between 8 years & 80.
>
> When I was in New York the other day Mrs. Dodge, editor of

> *St. Nicholas*, wrote and offered me $5,000 for (serial right) a story for boys 50,000 words long. I wrote back and declined, for I had other matter in my mind then.
>
> I conceive that the *right* way to write a story for boys is to write so that it will not only interest boys, but will also strongly interest any man *who has ever been a boy.* That immensely *enlarges the audience.*
>
> Now, this story doesn't need to be restricted to a child's magazine—it is proper enough for any magazine, I should think, or for a syndicate. I don't swear it, but I think so.
>
> Proposed title—*New Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.*

He was full of his usual enthusiasm in any new undertaking, and writes of the *Extraordinary Twins*:

> By and by I shall have to offer (for grown folks' magazine) a novel entitled, *Those Extraordinary Twins.* It's the howling farce I told you I had begun awhile back. I laid it aside to ferment while I wrote *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, but I took it up again on a little different plan lately, and it is swimming along satisfactorily now. I think all sorts of folks will read it. It is clear out of the common order—it is a fresh idea—I don't think it resembles anything in literature.

He was quite right; it did not resemble anything in literature, nor did it greatly resemble literature, though something at least related to literature would eventually grow out of it.

In a letter written many years afterward by Frank Mason, then consul-general at Frankfort, he refers to "that happy summer at Nauheim." Mason was often a visitor there, and we may believe that his memory of the summer was justified. For one thing, Clemens himself was in better health and spirits and able to continue his work. But an even greater happiness lay in the fact that two eminent physicians had pronounced Mrs. Clemens free from any organic ills. To Orion, Clemens wrote:

> We are in the clouds because the bath physicians say positively that Livy has no heart disease but has only weakness of

the heart muscles and will soon be well again. That was worth going to Europe to find out.

It was enough to change the whole atmosphere of the household, and financial worries were less considered. Another letter to Orion relates history:

> The Twichells have been here four days & we have had good times with them. Joe & I ran over to Homburg, the great pleasure-resort, Saturday, to dine with friends, & in the morning I went walking in the promenade & met the British ambassador to the Court of Berlin and he introduced me to the Prince of Wales. I found him a most unusually comfortable and unembarrassing Englishman.

Twichell has reported Mark Twain's meeting with the Prince (later Edward VII.) as having come about by special request of the latter, made through the British ambassador. "The meeting," he says, "was a most cordial one on both sides, and presently the Prince took Mark Twain's arm and the two marched up and down, talking earnestly together, the Prince, solid, erect, and soldier-like, Clemens weaving along in his curious, swinging gait in a full tide of talk, and brandishing a sun-umbrella of the most scandalous description."

When they parted Clemens said:

"It has been, indeed, a great pleasure to meet your Royal Highness."

The Prince answered:

"And it is a pleasure, Mr. Clemens, to have met you—again."

Clemens was puzzled to reply.

"Why," he said, "have we met before?"

The Prince smiled happily.

"Oh yes," he said; "don't you remember that day on the Strand when you were on the top of a 'bus and I was heading a procession and you had on your new overcoat with flap-pockets?"[1]

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[1] See chap. clxiii, "A Letter to the Queen of England."

It was the highest compliment he could have paid, for it showed that he had read, and had remembered all those years. Clemens expressed to Twichell regret that he had forgotten to mention his visit to the Prince's sister, Louise, in Ottawa, but he had his opportunity at a dinner next day. Later the Prince had him to supper and they passed an entire evening together.

There was a certain uneasiness in the Nauheim atmosphere that year, for the cholera had broken out at Hamburg, and its victims were dying at a terrific rate. It was almost impossible to get authentic news as to the spread of the epidemic, for the German papers were curiously conservative in their reports. Clemens wrote an article on the subject but concluded not to print it. A paragraph will convey its tenor.

> What I am trying to make the reader understand is the strangeness of the situation here—a mighty tragedy being played upon a stage that is close to us, & yet we are as ignorant of its details as we should be if the stage were in China. We sit "in front," & the audience is in fact the world; but the curtain is down, & from behind it we hear only an inarticulate murmur. The Hamburg disaster must go into history as the disaster without a history.

He closes with an item from a physician's letter—an item which he says "gives you a sudden and terrific sense of the situation there."

> For in a line it flashes before you—this ghastly picture—a thing seen by the physician: a wagon going along the street with five sick people in it, and with them four dead ones.

CLXXXII

THE VILLA VIVIANI

THE AMERICAN CLAIMANT, published in May (1892), did not bring a very satisfactory return. For one thing, the book-trade was light, and then the *Claimant* was not up to his usual standard. It had been written under hard circumstances and by a pen long out of practice; it had not paid, and its author must work all the harder on the new undertakings. The conditions at Nauheim seemed favorable, and they lingered there until well into September. To Mrs. Crane, who had returned to America, Clemens wrote on the 18th, from Lucerne, in the midst of their travel to Italy:

> We remained in Nauheim a little too long. If we had left four or five days earlier we should have made Florence in three days. Hard trip because it was one of those trains that gets tired every 7 minutes and stops to rest three-quarters of an hour. It took us 3½ hours to get there instead of the regulation 2 hours. We shall pull through to Milan to-morrow if possible. Next day we shall start at 10 A.M and try to make Bologna, 5 hours. Next day, Florence, D. V. Next year we will walk. Phelps came to Frankfort and we had some great times—dinner at his hotel; & the Masons, supper at our inn—Livy not in it. She was merely allowed a glimpse, no more. Of course Phelps said she was merely pretending to be ill; was never looking so well & fine.
>
> A Paris journal has created a happy interest by inoculating one of its correspondents with cholera. A man said yesterday he wished to God they would inoculate all of them. Yes, the interest is quite general and strong & much hope is felt.

> Livy says I have said enough bad things, and better send all our loves & shut up. Which I do—and shut up.

They lingered at Lucerne until Mrs. Clemens was rested and better able to continue the journey, arriving at last in Florence, September 26th. They drove out to the Villa Viviani in the afternoon and found everything in readiness for their reception, even to the dinner, which was prepared and on the table. Clemens, in his notes, speaks of this and adds:

> It takes but a sentence to state that, but it makes an indolent person tired to think of the planning & work and trouble that lie concealed in it.

Some further memoranda made at this time have that intimate interest which gives reality and charm. The *contadino* brought up their trunks from the station, and Clemens wrote:

> The *contadino* is middle-aged & like the rest of the peasants—that is to say, brown, handsome, good-natured, courteous, & entirely independent without making any offensive show of it. He charged too much for the trunks, I was told. My informer explained that this was customary.
>
> *September* 27. The rest of the trunks brought up this morning. He charged too much again, but I was told that this was also customary. It's all right, then. I do not wish to violate the customs. Hired landau, horses, & coachman. Terms, 480 francs a month & a *pourboire* to the coachman, I to furnish lodging for the man & the horses, but nothing else. The landau has seen better days & weighs 30 tons. The horses are feeble & object to the landau; they stop & turn around every now & then & examine it with surprise & suspicion. This causes delay. But it entertains the people along the road. They came out & stood around with their hands in their pockets & discussed the matter with each other. I was told that they said that a 30-ton landau was not the thing for horses like those—what they needed was a wheelbarrow.

His description of the house pictures it as exactly to-day as it did then, for it has not changed in these twenty years, nor greatly, perhaps, in the centuries since it was built.

> It is a plain, square building, like a box, & is painted light yellow & has green window-shutters. It stands in a commanding position on the artificial terrace of liberal dimensions, which is walled around with masonry. From the walls the vineyards & olive orchards of the estate slant away toward the valley. There are several tall trees, stately stone-pines, also fig-trees & trees of breeds not familiar to me. Roses overflow the retaining-walls, & the battered & mossy stone urn on the gate-posts, in pink & yellow cataracts exactly as they do on the drop-curtains in the theaters. The house is a very fortress for strength. The main walls—all brick covered with plaster—are about 3 feet thick. I have several times tried to count the rooms of the house, but the irregularities baffle me. There seem to be 28. There are plenty of windows & worlds of sunlight. The floors are sleek & shiny & full of reflections, for each is a mirror in its way, softly imaging all objects after the subdued fashion of forest lakes. The curious feature of the house is the salon. This is a spacious & lofty vacuum which occupies the center of the house. All the rest of the house is built around it; it extends up through both stories & its roof projects some feet above the rest of the building. The sense of its vastness strikes you the moment you step into it & cast your eyes around it & aloft. There are 5 divans distributed along its walls. They make little or no show, though their aggregate length is 57 feet. A piano in it is a lost object. We have tried to reduce the sense of desert space & emptiness with tables & things, but they have a defeated look, & do not do any good. Whatever stands or moves under that soaring painted vault is belittled.

He describes the interior of this vast room (they grew to love it), dwelling upon the plaster-relief portraits above its six doors, Florentine senators and judges, ancient dwellers there and former owners of the estate.

The date of one of them is 1305—middle-aged, then, & a judge—he could have known, as a youth, the very greatest Italian artists, & he could have walked & talked with Dante, & probably did. The date of another is 1343—he could have known Boccaccio & spent his afternoons wandering in Fiesole, gazing down on plague-reeking Florence & listening to that man's improper tales, & he probably did. The date of another is 1463—he could have met Columbus & he knew the magnificent Lorenzo, of course. These are all Cerretanis—or Cerretani-Twains, as I may say, for I have adopted myself into their family on account of its antiquity—my origin having been heretofore too recent to suit me.

We are considering the details of Viviani at some length, for it was in this setting that he began and largely completed what was to be his most important work of this later time—in some respects his most important of any time—the *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc.* If the reader loves this book, and he must love it if he has read it, he will not begrudge the space here given to the scene of its inspiration. The outdoor picture of Viviani is of even more importance, for he wrote oftener out-of-doors than elsewhere. Clemens added it to his notes several months later, but it belongs here.

The situation of this villa is perfect. It is three miles from Florence, on the side of a hill. Beyond some hill-spurs is Fiesole perched upon its steep terraces; in the immediate foreground is the imposing mass of the Ross castle, its walls and turrets rich with the mellow weather-stains of forgotten centuries; in the distant plain lies Florence, pink & gray & brown, with the ruddy, huge dome of the cathedral dominating its center like a captive balloon, & flanked on the right by the smaller bulb of the Medici chapel & on the left by the airy tower of the Palazzo Vecchio; all around the horizon is a billowy rim of lofty blue hills, snowed white with innumerable villas. After nine months of familiarity with this panorama I still think, as I thought in the beginning, that this is the fairest picture on our planet, the most enchanting

FLORENCE IN THE DISTANCE

to look upon, the most satisfying to the eye & the spirit. To see the sun sink down, drowned in his pink & purple & golden floods, & overwhelm Florence with tides of color that make all the sharp lines dim & faint & turn the solid city into a city of dreams, is a sight to stir the coldest nature & make a sympathetic one drunk with ecstasy.

The Clemens household at Florence consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Clemens, Susy, and Jean. Clara had soon returned to Berlin to attend Mrs. Willard's school and for piano instruction. Mrs. Clemens improved in the balmy autumn air of Florence and in the peaceful life of their well-ordered villa. In a memorandum of October 27th Clemens wrote:

> The first month is finished. We are wonted now. This care-free life at a Florentine villa is an ideal existence. The weather is divine, the outside aspects lovely, the days and nights tranquil and reposeful, the seclusion from the world and its worries as satisfactory as a dream. Late in the afternoons friends come out from the city & drink tea in the open air & tell what is happening in the world; & when the great sun sinks down upon Florence & the daily miracle begins they hold their breath & look. It is not a time for talk.

No wonder he could work in that environment. He finished *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, also a short story, "The £1,000,000 Bank-Note" (planned many years before), discovered the literary mistake of the *Extraordinary Twins* and began converting it into the worthier tale, *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, soon completed and on its way to America.

With this work out of his hands, Clemens was ready for his great new undertaking. A seed sown by the wind more than forty years before was ready to bloom. He would write the story of Joan of Arc.

CLXXXIII

THE SIEUR DE CONTÉ AND JOAN

IN a note which he made many years later Mark Twain declared that he was fourteen years at work on *Joan of Arc;* that he had been twelve years preparing for it, and that he was two years in writing it.

There is nothing in any of his earlier notes or letters to indicate that he contemplated the story of Joan as early as the eighties; but there is a bibliographical list of various works on the subject, probably compiled for him not much later than 1880, for the latest published work of the list bears that date. He was then too busy with his inventions and publishing schemes to really undertake a work requiring such vast preparation; but without doubt he procured a number of books and renewed that old interest begun so long ago when a stray wind had blown a leaf from that tragic life into his own. *Joan of Arc*, by Janet Tuckey, was apparently the first book he read with the definite idea of study, for this little volume had been recently issued, and his copy, which still exists, is filled with his marginal notes. He did not speak of this volume in discussing the matter in after-years. He may have forgotten it. He dwelt mainly on the old records of the trial which had been dug out and put into modern French by Quicherat; the *Jeanne d'Arc* of J. Michelet, and the splendid *Life of the Maid* of Lord Ronald Gower, these being remembered as his chief sources of information.[1]

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[1] The book of Janet Tuckey, however, and ten others, including those mentioned, are credited as "authorities examined in verification" on a front page of his published book. In a letter written

"I could not get the Quicherat and some of the other books in English," he said, "and I had to dig them out of the French. I began the story five times."

None of these discarded beginnings exists to-day, but we may believe they were wisely put aside, for no story of the Maid could begin more charmingly, more rarely, than the one supposedly told in his old age by Sieur Louis de Conté, secretary of Joan of Arc, and translated by Jean François Alden for the world to read. The impulse which had once prompted Mark Twain to offer *The Prince and the Pauper* anonymously now prevailed. He felt that the *Prince* had missed a certain appreciation by being connected with his signature, and he resolved that its companion piece (he so regarded *Joan*) should be accepted on its merits and without prejudice. Walking the floor one day at Viviani, smoking vigorously, he said to Mrs. Clemens and Susy:

"I shall never be accepted seriously over my own signature. People always want to laugh over what I write and are disappointed if they don't find a joke in it. This is to be a serious book. It means more to me than anything I have ever undertaken. I shall write it anonymously."

So it was that that gentle, quaint Sieur de Conté took up the pen, and the tale of *Joan* was begun in that beautiful spot which of all others seems now the proper environment for its lovely telling.

He wrote rapidly once he got his plan perfected and his material arranged. The reading of his youth and manhood, with the vivid impressions of that earlier time, became now something remembered, not merely as reading, but as fact.

at the conclusion of "Joan" in 1895, the author states that in the first two-thirds of the story he used one French and one English authority, while in the last third he had constantly drawn from five French and five English sources.

Others of the family went down into the city almost daily, but he remained in that still garden with *Joan* as his companion—the old Sieur de Conté, saturated with memories, pouring out that marvelous and tragic tale. At the end of each day he would read to the others what he had written, to their enjoyment and wonder.

How rapidly he worked may be judged from a letter which he wrote to Hall in February, in which he said:

> I am writing a companion piece to *The Prince and the Pauper*, which is half done & will make 200,000 words.

That is to say, he had written one hundred thousand words in a period of perhaps six weeks, marvelous work when one remembers that after all he was writing history, some of which he must dig laboriously from a foreign source. He had always, more or less, kept up his study of the French, begun so long ago on the river and it stood him in good stead now. Still, it was never easy for him, and the multitude of notes along the margin of his French authorities bears evidence of his faithfulness and the magnitude of his toil. No previous work had ever required so much of him, such thorough knowledge; none had ever so completely commanded his interest. He would have been willing to remain shut away from visitors, to have been released altogether from social obligations; and he did avoid most of them. Not all, for he could not always escape, and perhaps did not always really wish to. Florence and its suburbs were full of delightful people—some of them his old friends. There were luncheons, dinners, teas, dances, concerts, operas always in progress somewhere, and not all of these were to be resisted even by an absorbed author who was no longer himself, but sad old Sieur de Conté, following again the banner of the Maid of Orleans, marshaling her twilight armies across his illumined page.

CLXXXIV

NEW HOPE IN THE MACHINE

IF all human events had not been ordered in the first act of the primal atom, and so become inevitable, it would seem a pity now that he must abandon his work half-way, and make another hard, distracting trip to America.

But it was necessary for him to go. Even Hall was no longer optimistic. His letters provided only the barest shreds of hope. Times were hard and there was every reason to believe they would be worse. The World's Fair year promised to be what it speedily became—one of the hardest financial periods this country has ever seen. Chicago could hardly have selected a more profitless time for her great exposition. Clemens wrote urging Hall to sell out all, or a portion, of the business—to do anything, indeed, that would avoid the necessity of further liability and increased dread. Every payment that could be spared from the sales of his manuscript was left in Hall's hands, and such moneys as still came to Mrs. Clemens from her Elmira interests were flung into the general fund. The latter were no longer large, for Langdon & Co. were suffering heavily in the general depression, barely hoping to weather the financial storm.

It is interesting to note that age and misfortune and illness had a tempering influence on Mark Twain's nature. Instead of becoming harsh and severe and bitter, he had become more gentle, more kindly. He wrote often to Hall, always considerately, even tenderly. Once, when something in Hall's letter suggested that he had perhaps been severe, he wrote:

> Mrs. Clemens is deeply distressed, for she thinks I have been blaming you or finding fault with you about something. But most assuredly that cannot be. I tell her that although I am prone to write hasty and regrettable things to other people I am not a bit likely to write such things to you. I can't believe I have done anything so ungrateful. If I have, pile coals of fire upon my head for I deserve it. You have done magnificently with the business, & we must raise the money somehow to enable you to reap a reward for all that labor.

He was fond of Hall. He realized how honest and resolute and industrious he had been. In another letter he wrote him that it was wonderful he had been able to "keep the ship afloat in the storm that has seen fleets and fleets go down"; and he added: "Mrs. Clemens says I must tell you not to send us any money for a month or two, so that you may be afforded what little relief is in our power."

The type-setter situation seemed to promise something. In fact, the machine once more had become the principal hope of financial salvation. The new company seemed really to be getting ahead in spite of the money stringency, and was said to have fifty machines well under way. About the middle of March Clemens packed up two of his shorter manuscripts which he had written at odd times and forwarded them to Hall, in the hope that they would be disposed of and the money waiting him on his arrival; and a week later, March 22, 1893, he sailed from Genoa on the *Kaiser Wilhelm II.*, a fine, new boat. One of the manuscripts was "The Californian's Tale" and the other was *Adam's Diary.*[1]

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[1] It seems curious that neither of these tales should have found welcome with the magazines. "The Californian's Tale" was published in the *Liber Scriptorum*, an Authors' Club book, edited by Arthur Stedman. The *Diary* was disposed of to the *Niagara Book*, a souvenir of Niagara Falls, which contained sketches by Howells, Clemens, and others. *Harper's Magazine* republished both these stories in later years—the *Diary* especially with great success.

Some joke was likely to be played on Mark Twain during these ocean journeys, and for this particular voyage an original one was planned. They knew how he would fume and swear if he should be discovered with dutiable goods and held up in the Custom House, and they planned for this effect. A few days before arriving in New York one passenger after another came to him, each with a box of expensive cigars, and some pleasant speech expressing friendship and appreciation and a hope that they would be remembered in absence, etc., until he had perhaps ten or a dozen very choice boxes of smoking material. He took them all with gratitude and innocence. He had never declared any dutiable baggage, entering New York alone, and it never occurred to him that he would need to do so now. His trunk and bags were full; he had the cigars made into a nice package, to be carried handily, and on his arrival at the North German Lloyd docks stood waiting among his things for the formality of Customs examination, his friends assembled for the explosion.

They had not calculated well; the Custom-House official came along presently with the usual "Open your baggage, please," then suddenly recognizing the owner of it he said:

"Oh, Mr. Clemens, excuse me. We have orders to extend to you the courtesies of the port. No examination of your effects is necessary."

It was the evening of Monday, April 3d, when he landed in New York and went to the Hotel Glenham. In his notes he tells of having a two-hour talk with Howells on the following night. They had not seen each other for two years, and their correspondence had been broken off. It was a happy, even if somewhat sad, reunion, for they were no longer young, and when they called the roll of friends there were many vacancies. They had reached an age where some one they loved died every year. Writing to Mrs. Crane, Clemens speaks of the ghosts of memory; then he says:

> I dreamed I was born & grew up & was a pilot on the Mississippi & a miner & a journalist in Nevada & a pilgrim in the *Quaker City* & had a wife & children & went to live in a villa at Florence—& this dream goes on & on & sometimes seems so real that I almost believe it is real. I wonder if it is? But there is no way to tell, for if one applies tests they would be part of the dream, too, & so would simply aid the deceit. I wish I knew whether it is a dream or real.

He was made handsomely welcome in New York. His note-book says:

> *Wednesday.* Dined with Mary Mapes Dodge, Howells, Rudyard Kipling & wife, Clarke,[1] Jamie Dodge & wife.
>
> *Thursday*, 6th. Dined with Andrew Carnegie, Prof. Goldwin Smith, John Cameron, Mr. Glenn. Creation of league for absorbing Canada into our Union. Carnegie also wants to add Great Britain & Ireland.

It was on this occasion that Carnegie made his celebrated maxim about the basket and the eggs. Clemens was suggesting that Carnegie take an interest in the type-setter, and quoted the old adage that one should not put all of his eggs into one basket. Carnegie regarded him through half-closed lids, as was his custom, and answered:

"That's a mistake; put all your eggs into one basket—and watch that basket."

He had not come to America merely for entertainment. He was at the New York office of the type-setter company, acquiring there what seemed to be good news, for he was assured that his interests were being taken care of, and that within a year at most his royalty returns would place him far beyond the fear of want. He forwarded this good news to Italy, where it was sorely needed, for Mrs. Clemens found her courage not easy to sustain in his absence. That he had made his letter glowing enough, we may gather from her answer.

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[1] William Fayal Clarke, now editor of *St. Nicholas Magazine.*

> It does not seem credible that we are really again to have money to *spend*. I think I will jump around and spend money just for fun, and give a little away, if we really get some. What should we do and how should we feel if we had no bright prospects before us, and yet how many people are situated in that way?

He decided to make another trip to Chicago to verify, with his own eyes, the manufacturing reports, and to see Paige, who would appear to have become more elusive than ever as to contracts, written and implied. He took Hall with him, and wrote Orion to meet him at the Great Northern Hotel. This would give him a chance to see Orion and would give Orion a chance to see the great Fair. He was in Chicago eleven days, and in bed with a heavy cold almost the whole of that time. Paige came to see him at his rooms, and, as always, was rich in prospects and promises; full of protestations that, whatever came, when the tide of millions rolled in, they would share and share alike. The note-book says:

> Paige shed even more tears than usual. What a talker he is! He could persuade a fish to come out and take a walk with him. When he is present I always believe him; I can't help it.

Clemens returned to New York as soon as he was able to travel. Going down in the elevator a man stepped in from one of the floors swearing violently. Clemens, leaning over to Hall, with his hand to his mouth, and in a whisper audible to every one, said:

"Bishop of Chicago."

The man, with a quick glance, recognized his fellow-passenger and subsided.

On May 13th Clemens took the *Kaiser Wilhelm II.* for Genoa. He had accomplished little, but he was in better spirits as to the machine. If only the strain of his publishing business had slackened even for a moment! Night and day it was always with him. Hall presently wrote that the condition of the money-market was "something beyond description. You cannot get money on anything short of government bonds." The Mount Morris Bank would no longer handle their paper. The Clemens household resorted to economies hitherto undreamed of. Mrs. Clemens wrote to her sister that she really did not see sometimes where their next money would come from. She reported that her husband got up in the night and walked the floor in his distress.

He wrote again to Hall, urging him to sell and get rid of the debts and responsibilities at whatever sacrifice:

> I am terribly tired of business. I am by nature and disposition unfit for it, & I want to get out of it. I am standing on the Mount Morris volcano with help from the machine a long, long way off—& doubtless a long way further off than the Connecticut company imagine.
>
> Get me out of business!

He knew something of the delays of completing a typesetting machine, and he had little faith in any near relief from that source. He wrote again go Hall, urging him to sell some of his type-setter royalties. They should be worth something now since the manufacturing company was actually in operation; but with the terrible state of the money-market there was no sale for anything. Clemens attempted to work, but put in most of his time footing up on the margin of his manuscript the amount of his indebtedness, the expenses of his household, and the possibilities of his income. It was weary, hard, nerve-racking employment. About the middle of June they closed Viviani. Susy Clemens went to Paris to cultivate her voice, a rare soprano, with a view to preparing for the operatic stage. Clemens took Mrs. Clemens, with little Jean, to Germany for the baths. Clara, who had graduated from Mrs. Willard's school in Berlin, joined them in Munich, and somewhat later Susy also joined them, for Madame Marchesi, the great master of voice-culture, had told her that she must acquire physique to carry that voice of hers before she would undertake to teach her.

In spite of his disturbed state of mind Clemens must have completed some literary work during this period, for we find first mention, in a letter to Hall, of his immortal defense of Harriet Shelley, a piece of writing all the more marvelous when we consider the conditions of its performance. Characteristically, in the same letter, he suddenly develops a plan for a new enterprise—this time for a magazine which Arthur Stedman or his father will edit, and the Webster company will publish as soon as their present burdens are unloaded. But we hear no more of this project.

But by August he was half beside himself with anxiety. On the 6th he wrote Hall:

> Here we never see a newspaper, but even if we did I could not come anywhere near appreciating or correctly estimating the tempest you have been buffeting your way through—only the man who is in it can do that—but I have tried not to burden you thoughtlessly or wantonly. I have been overwrought & unsettled in mind by apprehensions, & that is a thing that is not helpable when one is in a strange land & sees his resources melt down to a two months' supply & can't see any sure daylight beyond. The bloody machine offers but a doubtful outlook—& will still offer nothing much better for a long time to come; for when the "three weeks" are up, there will be three months' tinkering to follow, I guess. That is unquestionably the boss machine of the world, but is the toughest one on prophets when it is in an incomplete state that has ever seen the light.

And three days later:

> Great Scott, but it's a long year—for you & me! I never knew the almanac to drag so. At least not since I was finishing that *other* machine.
>
> I watch for your letters hungrily—just as I used to watch for the telegram saying the machine's finished—but when "next week *certainly*" suddenly swelled into "three weeks *sure*" I recognized the old familiar tune I used to hear so much. W—— don't know what sickheartedness is—but he is in a way to find out.

And finally, on the 14th:

> I am very glad indeed if you and Mr. Langdon are able to see any daylight ahead. To me none is visible. I strongly advise that every penny that comes in shall be applied to paying off debts. I may be in error about this, but it seems to me that we have no other course open. We can pay a part of the debts owing to outsiders—none to Clemenses. In very prosperous times we might regard our stock & copyrights as assets sufficient, with the money owing to us, to square up & quit even, but I suppose we may not hope for such luck in the present condition of things.
>
> What I am mainly hoping for is to save my book royalties. If they come into danger I hope you will cable me so that I can come over & try to save them, for if they go I am a beggar.
>
> I would sail to-day if I had anybody to take charge of my family & help them through the difficult journeys commanded by the doctors.

A few days later he could stand it no longer, and on August 29 (1893) sailed, the second time that year, for New York.

CLXXXV

AN INTRODUCTION TO H. H. ROGERS

CLEMENS took a room at The Players—"a cheap room," he wrote, "at $1.50 per day." It was now the end of September, the beginning of a long half-year, during which Mark Twain's fortunes were at a lower ebb than ever before; lower, even, than during those mining days among the bleak Esmeralda hills. Then he had no one but himself and was young. Now, at fifty-eight, he had precious lives dependent upon him, and he was weighed down with a vast burden of debt. The liabilities of Charles L. Webster & Co. were fully two hundred thousand dollars. Something like sixty thousand dollars of this was money supplied by Mrs. Clemens, but the vast remaining sum was due to banks, to printers, to binders, and to dealers in various publishing materials. Somehow it must be paid. As for their assets, they looked ample enough on paper, but in reality, at a time like this, they were problematical. In fact, their value was very doubtful indeed. What he was to do Clemens did not know. He could not even send cheerful reports to Europe. There was no longer anything to promise concerning the type-setter. The fifty machines which the company had started to build had dwindled to ten machines; there was a prospect that the ten would dwindle to one, and that one a reconstruction of the original Hartford product, which had cost so much money and so many weary years. Clemens spent a good part of his days at The Players, reading or trying to write or seeking to divert his mind in the company of the congenial souls there, waiting for—he knew not what.

Yet at this very moment a factor was coming into his life, a human element, a man to whom in his old age Mark Twain owed more than to any other of his myriad of friends. One night, when he was with Dr. Clarence C. Rice at the Murray Hill Hotel, Rice said:

"Clemens, I want you to know my friend, Mr. H. H. Rogers. He is an admirer of your books."

Clemens turned and was looking into the handsome, clean-cut features of the great financier, whose name was hardly so familiar then as it became at a later period, but whose power was already widely known and felt among his kind.

"Mr. Clemens," said Mr. Rogers, "I was one of your early admirers. I heard you lecture a long time ago on the Sandwich Islands. I was interested in the subject in those days, and I heard that Mark Twain was a man who had been there. I didn't suppose I'd have any difficulty getting a seat, but I did; the house was jammed. When I came away I realized that Mark Twain was a great man, and I have read everything of yours since that I could get hold of."

They sat down at a table, and Clemens told some of his amusing stories. Rogers was in a perpetual gale of laughter. When at last he rose to go the author and the financier were as old friends. Mr. Rogers urged him to visit him at his home. He must introduce him to Mrs. Rogers, he said, who was also his warm admirer. It was only a little while after this that Dr. Rice said to the millionaire:

"Mr. Rogers, I wish you would look into Clemens's finances a little. I am afraid they are a good deal confused."

This would be near the end of September, 1893. On October 18 Clemens wrote home concerning a possible combination of Webster & Co. with John Brisben Walker, of the *Cosmopolitan*, and added:

HENRY H. ROGERS

I have got the best and wisest man of the whole Standard Oil group—a multi-millionaire—a good deal interested in looking into the type-setter. He has been searching into that thing for three weeks and yesterday he said to me:

"I find the machine to be all you represent it. I have here exhaustive reports from my own experts, and I know every detail of its capacity, its immense construction, its cost, its history, and all about its inventor's character. I know that the New York company and the Chicago company are *both* stupid, and that they are unbusinesslike people, destitute of money and in a hopeless boggle."

Then he told me the scheme he had planned and said:

"If I can arrange with these people on this basis—it will take several weeks to find out—I will see to it that they get the money they need. In the mean time *you 'stop walking the floor.'*"

Of course, with this encouragement, Clemens was in the clouds again. Furthermore, Rogers had suggested to his son-in-law, William Evarts Benjamin, also a subscription publisher, that he buy from the Webster company *The Library of American Literature* for fifty thousand dollars, a sum which provided for the more insistent creditors. There was hope that the worst was over. Clemens did in reality give up walking the floor, and for the time, at least, found happier diversions. He must not return to Europe as yet, for the type-setter matter was still far from conclusion. On the 11th of November he was gorgeously entertained by the Lotos Club in its new building. Introducing him, President Frank Lawrence said:

"What name is there in literature that can be likened to his? Perhaps some of the distinguished gentlemen about this table can tell us, but I know of none. Himself his only parallel, it seems to me. He is all our own —a ripe and perfect product of the American soil."

CLXXXVI

"THE BELLE OF NEW YORK"

THOSE were feverish weeks of waiting, with days of alternate depression and exaltation as the pendulum swung to and fro between hope and despair. By daylight Clemens tried to keep himself strenuously busy; evenings and nights he plunged into social activities—dinners, amusements, suppers, balls, and the like. He was besieged with invitations, sought for by the gayest and the greatest; "Jamie" Dodge conferred upon him the appropriate title of "The Belle of New York." In his letters home he describes in detail many of the festivities and the wildness with which he has flung himself into them, dilating on his splendid renewal of health, his absolute immunity from fatigue. He attributes this to his indifference to diet and regularities of meals and sleep; but we may guess that it was due to a reaction from having shifted his burden to stronger financial shoulders. Henry Rogers had taken his load upon him.

"It rests me," Rogers said, "to experiment with the affairs of a friend when I am tired of my own. You enjoy yourself. Let me work at the puzzle a little."

And Clemens, though his conscience pricked him, obeyed, as was his habit at such times. To Mrs. Clemens (in Paris now, at the Hôtel Brighton) he wrote:

> He is not common clay, but fine—fine & delicate. I did hate to burden his good heart & overworked head, but he took hold with avidity & said it was no burden to work for his friends, but

> a pleasure. When I arrived in September, Lord! how black the prospect was & how desperate, how incurably desperate! Webster & Co. had to have a small sum of money or go under at once. I flew to Hartford—to my friends—but they were not moved, not strongly interested, & I was ashamed that I went. It was from Mr. Rogers, a stranger, that I got the money and was by it saved. And then—while still a stranger—he set himself the task of saving my financial life without putting upon me (in his native delicacy) any sense that I was the recipient of a charity, a benevolence. He gave time to me—time, which could not be bought by any man at $100,000 a month—no, nor for three times the money.

He adds that a friend has just offered to Webster & Co. a book that arraigns the Standard Oil magnates individual by individual.

> I wanted to say the only man I care for in the world, the only man I would give a d—n for, the only man who is lavishing his sweat & blood to save me & mine from starvation is a Standard Oil magnate. If you know me, you know whether I want the book or not.
>
> But I didn't say that. I said I didn't want *any* book; I wanted to get out of this publishing business & out of all business & was here for that purpose & would accomplish it if I could.

He tells how he played billiards with Rogers, tirelessly as always, until the millionaire had looked at him helplessly and asked:

"Don't you ever get tired?"

And he answered:

"I don't know what it is to get tired. I wish I did."

He wrote of going with Mr. Rogers to the Madison Square Garden to see an exhibition of boxing given by the then splendid star of pugilism, James J. Corbett. Dr. Rice accompanied him, and painters Robert Reid and Edward Simmons, from The Players. They had five seats in a box, and Stanford White came along presently and took Clemens into the champion's dressing-room.

Corbett has a fine face and is modest and diffident, besides being the most perfectly & beautifully constructed human animal in the world. I said:

"You have whipped Mitchell & maybe you will whip Jackson in June—but you are not done then. You will have to tackle me."

He answered, so gravely that one might easily have thought him in earnest:

"No, I am not going to meet you in the ring. It is not fair or right to require it. You might chance to knock me out, by no merit of your own, but by a purely accidental blow, & then my reputation would be gone & you would have a double one. You have got fame enough & you ought not to want to take mine away from me."

Corbett was for a long time a clerk in the Nevada Bank, in San Francisco.

There were lots of little boxing-matches to entertain the crowd; then at last Corbett appeared in the ring & the 8,000 people present went mad with enthusiasm. My two artists went mad about his form. They said they had never seen anything that came reasonably near equaling its perfection except Greek statues, & *they* didn't surpass it.

Corbett boxed 3 rounds with the middle-weight Australian champion—oh, beautiful to see!—then the show was over and we struggled out through a perfect mash of humanity. When we reached the street I found I had left my arctics in the box. I had to have them, so Simmons said he would go back & get them, & I didn't dissuade him. I couldn't see how he was going to make his way a single yard into that solid incoming wave of people—yet he must plow through it full 50 yards. He was back with the shoes in 3 minutes!

How do you reckon he accomplished that miracle? By saying:

"Way, gentlemen, please—coming to fetch Mr. Corbett's overshoes."

The word flew from mouth to mouth, the Red Sea divided, & Simmons walked comfortably through & back, dry-shod. This is Fire-escape Simmons, the inveterate talker, you know: *Exit—in case of Simmons.*

I had an engagement at a beautiful dwelling close to The Players for 10.30; I was there by 10.45. Thirty cultivated &

very musical ladies & gentlemen present—all of them acquaintances & many of them personal friends of mine. That wonderful Hungarian band was there (they charge $500 for an evening). Conversation and band until midnight; then a bite of supper; then the company was compactly grouped before me & I told them about Dr. B. E. Martin & the etchings, & followed it with the Scotch-Irish christening. My, but the Martin is a darling story! Next, the head tenor from the Opera sang half a dozen great songs that set the company wild, yes, mad with delight, that nobly handsome young Damrosch accompanying on the piano.

Just a little pause, then the band burst out into an explosion of weird and tremendous dance-music, a Hungarian celebrity & his wife took the floor; I followed—I couldn't help it; the others drifted in, one by one, & it was Onteora over again.

By half past 4 I had danced all those people down—& yet was not tired; merely breathless. I was in bed at 5 & asleep in ten minutes. Up at 9 & presently at work on this letter to you. I think I wrote until 2 or half past. Then I walked leisurely out to Mr. Rogers's (it is called 3 miles, but is short of it), arriving at 3.30, but he was out—to return at 5.30—so I didn't stay, but dropped over and chatted with Howells until five.[1]

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[1] Two Mark Twain anecdotes are remembered of that winter at The Players:

Just before Christmas a member named Scott said one day:

"Mr. Clemens, you have an extra overcoat hanging in the coatroom. I've got to attend my uncle's funeral and it's raining very hard. I'd like to wear it."

The coat was an old one, in the pockets of which Clemens kept a melancholy assortment of pipes, soiled handkerchiefs, neckties, letters, and what not.

"Scott," he said, "if you won't lose anything out of the pockets of that coat you may wear it."

An hour or two later Clemens found a notice in his mail-box that a package for him was in the office. He called for it and found a neat bundle, which somehow had a Christmas look. He carried it up to the reading-room with a showy air.

"Now, boys," he said, "you may make all the fun of Christmas you like, but it's pretty nice, after all, to be remembered."

They gathered around and he undid the package. It was filled

In one letter he tells of a dinner with his old Comstock friend, John Mackay—a dinner without any frills, just soup and raw oysters and corned beef and cabbage, such as they had reveled in sometimes, in prosperous moments, thirty years before.

"The guests were old gray Pacific coasters," he said, "whom I knew when they were young and not gray. The talk was of the days when we went gipsying—a long time ago—thirty years."

> Indeed, it was a talk of the dead. Mainly that. And of how they looked & the harum-scarum things they did & said. For there were no cares in that life, no aches & pains, & not time enough in the day (& three-fourths of the night) to work off one's surplus vigor & energy. Of the midnight highway-robbery joke played upon me with revolvers at my head on the wind-swept & desolate Gold Hill Divide no witness was left but me, the victim. Those old fools last night laughed till they cried over the particulars of that old forgotten crime.

In still another letter he told of a very wonderful enter-

with the pipes, soiled handkerchiefs, and other articles from the old overcoat. Scott had taken special precautions against losing them.

Mark Twain regarded them a moment in silence, then he drawled:

"Well—d—n Scott. I hope his uncle's funeral will be a failure!"

The second anecdote concerns The Player egg-cups. They easily hold two eggs, but not three. One morning a new waiter came to take the breakfast order. Clemens said:

"Boy, put three soft eggs in that cup for me."

By and by the waiter returned, bringing the breakfast. Clemens looked at the egg portion and asked:

"Boy, what was my order?"

"Three soft eggs broken in the cup, Mr. Clemens."

"And you've filled that order, have you?"

"Yes, Mr. Clemens."

"Boy, you are trifling with the truth; I've been trying all winter to get three eggs into that cup."

tainment at Robert Reid's studio. There were present, he says:

> Coquelin;
> Richard Harding Davis;
> Harrison, the great outdoor painter;
> Wm. H. Chase, the artist;
> Bettini, inventor of the new phonograph;
> Nikola Tesla, the world-wide illustrious electrician; see article about him in Jan. or Feb. *Century*.
> John Drew, actor;
> James Barnes, a marvelous mimic; my, you should see him!
> Smedley, the artist;
> Zorn, " "
> Zogbaum, " "
> Reinhart, " "
> Metcalf, " "
> Ancona, head tenor at the Opera;
> Oh, & a great lot of others. Everybody there had done something & was in his way famous.
>
> Somebody welcomed Coquelin in a nice little French speech, John Drew did the like for me in English, & then the fun began. Coquelin did some excellent French monologues—one of them an ungrammatical Englishman telling a colorless historiette in French. It nearly killed the fifteen or twenty people who understood it.
>
> I told a yarn, Ancona sang half a dozen songs, Barnes did his darling imitations, Harding Davis sang the hanging of Danny Deever, which was of course good, but he followed it with that most fascinating (for what reason I don't know) of all Kipling's poems, "On the Road to Mandalay," sang it tenderly, & it searched me deeper & charmed me more than the Deever.
>
> Young Gerrit Smith played some ravishing dance-music, & we all danced about an hour. There couldn't be a pleasanter night than that one was. Some of those people complained of fatigue, but I don't seem to know what the sense of fatigue is.

In his reprieve he was like some wild thing that had regained liberty.

He refers to Susy's recent illness and to Mrs. Clemens's own poor state of health.

> Dear, dear Susy! My strength reproaches me when I think of her and you.
>
> It is an unspeakable pity that you should be without any one to go about with the girls, & it troubles me, & grieves me, & makes me curse & swear; but you see, dear heart, I've got to stick right where I am till I find out whether we are rich or whether the poorest person we are acquainted with in anybody's kitchen is better off than we are. I stand on the land-end of a spring-board, with the family clustered on the other end; if I take my foot—

He realized his hopes to her as a vessel trying to make port; once he wrote:

> The ship is in sight now. . . .
>
> When the anchor is down then I shall say:
>
> "Farewell—a long farewell—to *business!* I will *never* touch it again!"
>
> I will live in literature, I will wallow in it, revel in it; I will swim in ink! *Joan of Arc*—but all this is premature; the anchor is not down yet.

Sometimes he sent her impulsive cables calculating to sustain hope. Mrs. Clemens, writing to her sister in January, said:

> Mr. Clemens now for ten days has been hourly expecting to send me word that Paige had signed the (new) contract, but as yet no despatch comes. . . . On the 5th of this month I received a cable, "Expect good news in ten days." On the 15th I receive a cable, "Look out for good news." On the 19th a cable, "Nearing success."

It appealed to her sense of humor even in these dark days. She added:

> They make me laugh, for they are so like my beloved "Colonel."

Mr. Rogers had agreed that he would bring Paige to rational terms, and with Clemens made a trip to Chicago. All agreed now that the machine promised a certain fortune as soon as a contract acceptable to everybody could be concluded—Paige and his lawyer being the last to dally and dicker as to terms. Finally a telegram came from Chicago saying that Paige had agreed to terms. On that day Clemens wrote in his note-book:

> This is a great date in my history. Yesterday we were paupers with but 3 months' rations of cash left and $160,000 in debt, my wife & I, but this telegram makes us wealthy.

But it was not until a fortnight later that Paige did actually sign. This was on the 1st of February, '94, and Clemens that night cabled to Paris, so that Mrs. Clemens would have it on her breakfast-plate the morning of their anniversary:

"Wedding news. Our ship is safe in port. I sail the moment Rogers can spare me."

So this painted bubble, this thing of emptiness, had become as substance again—the grand hope. He was as concerned with it as if it had been an actual gold-mine with ore and bullion piled in heaps—that shadow, that farce, that nightmare. One longs to go back through the years and face him to the light and arouse him to the vast sham of it all.

CLXXXVII

SOME LITERARY MATTERS

CLEMENS might have lectured that winter with profit, and Major Pond did his best to persuade him; but Rogers agreed that his presence in New York was likely to be too important to warrant any schedule of absence. He went once to Boston to lecture for charity, though his pleasure in the experience was a sufficient reward. On the evening before the lecture Mrs. James T. Fields had him to her house to dine with Dr. Holmes, then not far from the end of his long, beautiful life.[1]

Clemens wrote to Paris of their evening together:

> Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes never goes out (he is in his 84th year), but he came out this time—said he wanted to "have a time" once more with me.
>
> Mrs. Fields said Aldrich begged to come, & went away crying because she wouldn't let him. She allowed only her family (Sarah Orne Jewett & sister) to be present, because much company would overtax Dr. Holmes.
>
> Well, he was just delightful! He did as brilliant and beautiful talking (& listening) as he ever did in his life, I guess. Fields and Jewett said he hadn't been in such splendid form for years. He had ordered his carriage for 9. The coachman sent in for him at 9, but he said, "Oh, nonsense!—leave glories & grandeurs like these? Tell him to go away & come in an hour!"
>
> At 10 he was called for again, & Mrs. Fields, getting uneasy, rose, but he wouldn't go—& so we rattled ahead the same as ever. Twice more Mrs. Fields rose, but he wouldn't go—& he

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[1] He died that same year, October, 1894.

didn't go till half past 10—an unwarrantable dissipation for him in these days. He was prodigiously complimentary about some of my books, & is having *Pudd'nhead* read to him. I told him you & I used the *Autocrat* as a courting book & marked it all through, & that you keep it in the sacred green box with the love-letters, & it pleased him.

One other address Clemens delivered that winter, at Fair Haven, on the opening of the Millicent Library, a present to the town from Mrs. Rogers. Mrs. Rogers had suggested to her husband that perhaps Mr. Clemens would be willing to say a few words there. Mr. Rogers had replied, "Oh, Clemens is in trouble. I don't like to ask him," but a day or two later told him of Mrs. Rogers's wish, adding:

"Don't feel at all that you need to do it. I know just how you are feeling, how worried you are."

Clemens answered, "Mr. Rogers, do you think there is anything I could do for you that I wouldn't do?"

It was on this occasion that he told for the first time the "stolen watermelon" story, so often reprinted since; how once he had stolen a watermelon, and when he found it to be a green one, had returned it to the farmer, with a lecture on honesty, and received a ripe one in its place.

In spite of his cares and diversions Clemens's literary activities of this time were considerable. He wrote an article for the *Youth's Companion*—"How to Tell a Story"—and another for the *North American Review* on Fenimore Cooper's "Literary Offenses." Mark Twain had not much respect for Cooper as a literary artist. Cooper's stilted artificialities and slipshod English exasperated him and made it hard for him to see that in spite of these things the author of the *Deerslayer* was a mighty story-teller. Clemens had also promised some stories to Walker, of the *Cosmopolitan*, and gave him one for his Christmas number, "Traveling with a Reformer," which had grown out of some incidents of that long-ago journey with Osgood to Chicago, supplemented by others that had happened on the more recent visit to that city with Hall. This story had already appeared when Clemens and Rogers had made their Chicago trip. Rogers had written for passes over the Pennsylvania road, and the president, replying, said:

"No, I won't give Mark Twain a pass over our road. I've been reading his 'Traveling with a Reformer,' in which he abuses our road. I wouldn't let him ride over it again if I could help it. The only way I'll agree to let him go over it at all is in my private car. I have stocked it with everything he can possibly want, and have given orders that if there is anything else he wants the train is to be stopped until they can get it."

"Pudd'nhead Wilson" was appearing in the *Century* during this period, and "Tom Sawyer Abroad" in the *St. Nicholas*. The *Century* had issued a tiny calendar of the Pudd'nhead maxims, and these quaint bits of philosophy, the very gems of Mark Twain mental riches, were in everybody's mouth. With all this going on, and with his appearance at various social events, he was rather a more spectacular figure that winter than ever before.

From the note-book:

The Haunted Looking-glass. The guest (at midnight a dim light burning) wakes up & sees appear & disappear the faces that have looked into the glass during 3 centuries.

Love seems the swiftest but is the slowest of all growths. No man and woman really know what perfect love is until they have been married a quarter of a century.

It is more trouble to make a maxim than it is to do right.

Of all God's creatures, there is only one that cannot be made the slave of the lash—that one is the cat.

Truth is stranger than fiction—to some people, but I am measurably familiar with it.

CLXXXVIII

FAILURE

IT was the first week in March before it was thought to be safe for Clemens to return to France, even for a brief visit to his family. He hurried across and remained with them what seemed an infinitesimal time, a bare three weeks, and was back again in New York by the middle of April. The Webster company difficulties had now reached an acute stage. Mr. Rogers had kept a close watch on its financial affairs, hoping to be able to pull it through or to close it without failure, paying all the creditors in full; but on the afternoon of the 16th of April, 1894, Hall arrived at Clemens's room at The Players in a panic. The Mount Morris Bank had elected a new president and board of directors, and had straightway served notice on him that he must pay his notes—two notes of five thousand dollars each in a few days—when due. Mr. Rogers was immediately notified, of course, and said he would sleep on it and advise them next day. He did not believe that the bank would really push them to the wall. The next day was spent in seeing what could be done, and by evening it was clear that unless a considerable sum of money was raised a voluntary assignment was the proper course. The end of the long struggle had come. Clemens hesitated less on his own than on his wife's account. He knew that to her the word failure would be associated with disgrace. She had pinched herself with a hundred economies to keep the business afloat, and was willing to go on economizing to avert this final disaster. Mr. Rogers said:

"Mr. Clemens, assure her from me that there is not even a tinge of disgrace in making this assignment. By doing it you will relieve yourself of a fearful load of dread, and in time will be able to pay everything and stand clear before the world. If you don't do it you will probably never be free from debt, and it will kill you and Mrs. Clemens both. If there is any disgrace it would be in *not* taking the course that will give you and her your freedom and your creditors a better chance for their claims. Most of them will be glad enough to help you."

It was on the afternoon of the next day, April 18, 1894, that the firm of Charles L. Webster & Co. executed assignment papers and closed its doors. A meeting of the creditors was called, at which H. H. Rogers was present, representing Clemens. For the most part the creditors were liberal and willing to agree to any equitable arrangement. But there were a few who were grumpy and fussy. They declared that Mark Twain should turn over his copyrights, his Hartford home, and whatever other odds and ends could be discovered. Mr. Rogers, discussing the matter in 1908, said:

"They were bent on devouring every pound of flesh in sight and picking the bones afterward, as Clemens and his wife were perfectly willing they should do. I was getting a little warm all the time at the high-handed way in which these few men were conducting the thing, and presently I got on my feet and said, 'Gentlemen, you are not going to have this thing all your way. I have something to say about Mr. Clemens's affairs. Mrs. Clemens is the chief creditor of this firm. Out of her own personal fortune she has lent it more than sixty thousand dollars. She will be a preferred creditor, and those copyrights will be assigned to her until her claim is paid in full. As for the home in Hartford, it is hers already.'

"There was a good deal of complaint, but I refused to budge. I insisted that Mrs. Clemens had the first claims on the copyrights, though, to tell the truth, these did not promise much then, for in that hard year the sale of books was small enough. Besides Mrs. Clemens's claim the debts amounted to one hundred thousand dollars, and of course there must be a definite basis of settlement, so it was agreed that Clemens should pay fifty cents on the dollar, when the assets were finally realized upon, and receive a quittance. Clemens himself declared that sooner or later he would pay the other fifty cents, dollar for dollar, though I believe there was no one besides himself and his wife and me who believed he would ever be able to do it. Clemens himself got discouraged sometimes, and was about ready to give it up, for he was getting on in years—nearly sixty—and he was in poor health. Once when we found the debt, after the Webster salvage, was going to be at least seventy thousand dollars, he said, 'I need not dream of paying it. I never could manage it.' But he stuck to it. He was at my house a good deal at first. We gave him a room there and he came and went as he chose. The worry told upon him. He became frail during those weeks, almost ethereal, yet it was strange how brilliant he was, how cheerful."

The business that had begun so promisingly and prosperously a decade before had dwindled to its end. The last book it had in hand was *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, just ready for issue. It curiously happened that on the day of the failure copies of it were filed in Washington for copyright. Frank Bliss came over from Hartford, and Clemens arranged with him for the publication of *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, thereby renewing the old relationship with the American Publishing Company after a break of a dozen years.

Naturally, the failure of Mark Twain's publishing firm made a public stir, and it showed how many and sincere were his friends, how ready they were with sympathy and help of a more material kind. Those who understood best, congratulated him on being out of the entanglement.

Poultney Bigelow, Douglas Taylor, Andrew Carnegie, Charles Dudley Warner, and others extended financial help, Bigelow and Taylor each inclosing him a check of one thousand dollars for immediate necessities. He was touched by these things, but the checks were returned. Many of his creditors sent him personal letters assuring him that he was to forget his obligation to them completely until such time as the remembering would cost him no uneasiness.

Clemens, in fact, felt relieved, now that the worst had come, and wrote bright letters home. In one he said:

> Mr. Rogers is perfectly satisfied that our course was right, absolutely right and wise—cheer up, the best is yet to come.

And again:

> Now & then a good and dear Joe Twichell or Susy Warner condoles with me & says, "Cheer up—don't be downhearted," and some other friend says, "I'm glad and surprised to see how cheerful you are & how bravely you stand it," & none of them suspect what a burden has been lifted from me & how blithe I am inside. *Except* when I think of you, dear heart—then I am not blithe; for I seem to see you grieving and ashamed, & dreading to look people in the face. For in the thick of the fight there is cheer, but you are far away & cannot hear the drum nor see the wheeling squadrons. You only seem to see rout, retreat, & dishonored colors dragging in the dirt—whereas none of these things exist. There is temporary defeat, but no dishonor—& we will march again. Charley Warner said to-day, "Sho, Livy isn't worrying. So long as she's got you and the children she doesn't care what happens. She knows it isn't her affair." Which didn't convince *me*.

Olivia Clemens wrote bravely and encouragingly to him, and more cheerfully than she felt, for in a letter to her sister she said:

> The hideous news of Webster & Co.'s failure reached me by cable on Thursday, and Friday morning *Galignani's Messenger*

had a squib about it. Of course I knew it was likely to come, but I had great hope that it would be in some way averted. Mr. Rogers was so sure there was no way out but failure that I suppose it was true. But I have a perfect *horror* and heart-sickness over it. I cannot get away from the feeling that business failure means disgrace. I suppose it always will mean that to me. We have put a great deal of money into the concern, and perhaps there would have been nothing but to keep putting it in and losing it. We certainly now have not much to lose. We might have mortgaged the house; that was the only thing I could think of to do. Mr. Clemens felt that there would never be any end, and perhaps he was right. At any rate, I know that he was convinced that it was the only thing, because when he went back he promised me that if it was possible to save the thing he would do so if only on account of my sentiment in the matter.

Sue, if you were to see me you would see that I have grown old very fast during this last year. I have wrinkled.

Most of the time I want to lie down and cry. Everything seems to me so impossible. I do not make things go very well, and I feel that my life is an absolute and irretrievable failure. Perhaps I am thankless, but I so often feel that I should like to give it up and die. However, I presume that if I could have the opportunity I should at once desire to live.

Clemens now hurried back to Paris, arriving about the middle of May, his second trip in two months. Scarcely had he got the family settled at La Bourboule-les-Bains, a quiet watering-place in the southern part of France, when a cable from Mr. Rogers, stating that the typesetter was perfected, made him decide to hurry back to America to assist in securing the new fortune. He did not go, however. Rogers wrote that the machine had been installed in the *Times-Herald* office, Chicago, for a long and thorough trial. There would be plenty of time, and Clemens concluded to rest with his family at La Bourboule-les-Bains. Later in the summer they went to Étretat, where he settled down to work.

CLXXXIX

AN EVENTFUL YEAR ENDS

THAT summer (July, '94) the *North American Review* published "In Defense of Harriet Shelley," a rare piece of literary criticism and probably the most human and convincing plea ever made for that injured, ill-fated woman. An admirer of Shelley's works, Clemens could not resist taking up the defense of Shelley's abandoned wife. It had become the fashion to refer to her slightingly, and to suggest that she had not been without blame for Shelley's behavior. A Shelley biography by Professor Dowden, Clemens had found particularly irritating. In the midst of his tangle of the previous year he had paused to give it attention. There were times when Mark Twain wrote without much sequence, digressing this way and that, as his fancy led him, charmingly and entertainingly enough, with no large, logical idea. He pursued no such method in this instance. The paper on Harriet Shelley is a brief as direct and compact and cumulative as could have been prepared by a trained legal mind of the highest order, and it has the added advantage of being the utterance of a human soul voicing an indignation inspired by human suffering and human wrong. By no means does it lack humor, searching and biting sarcasm. The characterization of Professor Dowden's Life of Shelley as a "literary cake-walk" is a touch which only Mark Twain could have laid on. Indeed, the "Defense of Harriet Shelly," with those early chapters of *Joan* at Florence, may be counted as the beginning for Mark Twain of a genuine literary renaissance. It was to prove a remarkable period—less voluminous than the first, but even more choice, containing, as it would, besides *Joan* and the Shelley article, the rest of that remarkable series collected now as *Literary Essays;* the Hadleyburg story; "Was it Heaven or Hell?"; those masterly articles on our national policies; closing at last with those exquisite memories, in his final days.

The summer of 1894 found Mark Twain in the proper frame of mind for literary work. He was no longer in a state of dread. At Étretat, a watering-place on the French coast, he returned eagerly to the long-neglected tale of *Joan*—"a book which writes itself," he wrote Mr. Rogers—"a tale which tells itself; I merely have to hold the pen." Étretat, originally a fishing-village, was less pretentious than to-day, and the family had taken a small furnished cottage a little way back from the coast—a charming place, and a cheap one—as became their means. Clemens worked steadily at Étretat for more than a month, finishing the second part of his story, then went over to Rouen to visit the hallowed precincts where Joan dragged out those weary months that brought her to the stake. Susy Clemens was taken ill at Rouen, and they lingered in that ancient city, wandering about its venerable streets, which have been changed but slowly by the centuries, and are still full of memories.

They returned to Paris at length—to the Brighton, their quarters of the previous winter—but presently engaged for the winter the studio home of the artist Pomroy at 169 rue de l'Université, beyond the Seine. Mark Twain wrote of it once:

> It was a lovely house; large, rambling, quaint, charmingly furnished and decorated, built upon no particular plan, delightfully uncertain and full of surprises. You were always getting lost in it, and finding nooks and corners which you did not

know were there and whose presence you had not suspected before. It was built by a rich French artist, and he had also furnished it and decorated it himself. The studio was coziness itself. With us it served as a drawing-room, sitting-room, living-room, dancing-room—we used it for everything. We couldn't get enough of it. It is odd that it should have been so cozy, for it was 40 feet long, 40 feet high, and 30 feet wide, with a vast fireplace on each side, in the middle, and a musicians' gallery at one end.

Mrs. Clemens had hoped to return to America, to their Hartford home. That was her heart's desire—to go back once more to their old life and fireside, to forget all this period of exile and wandering. Her letters were full of her home-longing; her three years of absence seemed like an eternity.

In its way, the Pomroy house was the best substitute for home they had found. Its belongings were of the kind she loved. Susy had better health, and her husband was happy in his work. They had much delightful and distinguished company. Her letters tell of these attractive things, and of their economies to make their income reach.

It was near the end of the year that the other great interest—the machine—came finally to a conclusion. Reports from the test had been hopeful during the summer. Early in October Clemens, receiving a copy of the *Times-Herald*, partly set by the machine, wrote: "The *Herald* has just arrived, and that column is healing for sore eyes. It affects me like Columbus sighting land." And again on the 28th:

> It seems to me that things couldn't well be going better at Chicago than they are. There's no other machine that can set type eight hours with only seventeen minutes' stoppage through cussedness. The others do rather more stopping than working. By and by our machines will be perfect; then they won't stop at all.

But that was about the end of the good news. The stoppages became worse and worse. The type began to break—the machine had its old trouble: it was too delicately adjusted—too complicated.

"Great guns, what is the matter with it?" wrote Clemens in November when he received a detailed account of its misconduct.

Mr. Rogers and his son-in-law, Mr. Broughton, went out to Chicago to investigate. They went to the *Times-Herald* office to watch the type-setter in action. Mr. Rogers once told of this visit to the writer of these chapters. He said:

"Certainly it was a marvelous invention. It was the nearest approach to a human being in the wonderful things it could do of any machine I have ever known. But that was just the trouble; it was too much of a human being and not enough of a machine. It had all the complications of the human mechanism, all the liability of getting out of repair, and it could not be replaced with the ease and immediateness of the human being. It was too costly; too difficult of construction; too hard to set up. I took out my watch and timed its work and counted its mistakes. We watched it a long time, for it was most interesting, most fascinating, but it was not practical—that to me was clear."

It had failed to stand the test. The *Times-Herald* would have no more of it. Mr. Rogers himself could see the uselessness of the endeavor. He instructed Mr. Broughton to close up the matter as best he could and himself undertook the harder task of breaking the news to Mark Twain. His letters seem not to have been preserved, but the replies to them tell the story.

169 rue de l'Université,
PARIS, *December 22, 1894.*

DEAR MR. ROGERS,—I *seemed* to be entirely expecting your letter, and also prepared and resigned; but Lord, it shows how little we know ourselves and how easily we can deceive ourselves. It hit me like a thunder-clap. It knocked every rag of sense out of my head, and I went flying here and there and yonder, not knowing what I was doing, and only one clearly defined thought standing up visible and substantial out of the crazy storm-drift—that my dream of ten years was in desperate peril and out of the 60,000 or 70,000 projects for its rescue that came flocking through my skull not one would hold still long enough for me to examine it and size it up. Have you ever been like that? Not so much, I reckon.

There was another clearly defined idea—I must be there and see it die. That is, if it must die; and maybe if I were there we might hatch up some next-to-impossible way to make it take up its bed and take a walk.

So, at the end of four hours I started, still whirling, and walked over to the rue Scribe—4 P.M.—and asked a question or two and was told I should be running a big risk if I took the 9 P.M. train for London and Southampton; "better come right along at 6.52 per Havre special and step aboard the New York all easy and comfortable." Very! and I about two miles from home and no packing done.

Then it occurred to me that none of these salvation notions that were whirlwinding through my head could be examined or made available unless at least a month's time could be secured. So I cabled you, and said to myself that I would take the French steamer to-morrow (which will be Sunday).

By bedtime Mrs. Clemens had reasoned me into a fairly rational and contented state of mind; but of course it didn't last long. So I went on thinking—mixing it with a smoke in the dressing-room once an hour—until dawn this morning. Result—a sane resolution; no matter what your answer to my cable might be I would hold still and not sail until I should get an answer to this present letter which I am now writing or a cable answer from you saying "Come" or "Remain."

I have slept 6 hours, my pond has clarified, and I find the sediment of my 70,000 projects to be of this character:

He follows with a detailed plan for reconstructing the machine, using brass type, etc., and concludes:

Don't say I'm wild. For really I'm sane again this morning. I am going right along with *Joan* now, and wait untroubled till I hear from you. If you think I can be of the least use cable me "Come." I can write *Joan* on board ship and lose no time. Also I could discuss my plan with the publisher for a *de luxe Joan*, time being an object, for some of the pictures could be made over here, cheaply and quickly, that would cost much more time and money in America.

The second letter followed five days later:

169 rue de l'Université,
PARIS, *December 27, 1894.*

DEAR MR. ROGERS,—Notwithstanding your heart is "old and hard" you make a body choke up. I *know* you "mean every word you say" and I do take it "in the same spirit in which you tender it." I shall keep your regard while we two live—that I know; for I shall always remember what you have done for me, and that will insure me against ever doing anything that could forfeit it or impair it.

It is six days or seven days ago that I lived through that despairing day, and then through a night without sleep; then settled down next day into my right mind (or thereabouts) and wrote you. I put in the rest of that day till 7 P.M. plenty comfortably enough writing a long chapter of my book; then went to a masked ball blacked up as Uncle Remus, taking Clara along, and we had a good time. I have lost no day since, and suffered no discomfort to speak of, but drove my troubles out of my mind and had good success in keeping them out—through watchfulness. I have done a good week's work and put the book a good way ahead in the Great Trial [of Joan], which is the difficult part; the part which requires the most thought and carefulness. I cannot see the end of the Trial yet, but I am on the road. I am creeping surely toward it.

"Why not leave them all to me?" My business brothers? I take you by the hand! I jump at the chance!

I ought to be ashamed and I am trying my best to *be* ashamed —and yet I do jump at the chance in spite of it. I don't want to write Irving and I don't want to write Stoker. It doesn't seem as if I *could*. But I can suggest something for *you* to write them; and then if you see that I am unwise you can write them something quite different. Now this is my idea:

1. To return Stoker's $100 to him and keep his stock.
2. And tell Irving that when luck turns with me I will make good to him what the salvage from the dead Co. fails to pay him of his $500.

[*P. S.* Madam says *No*, I must face the music. So I inclose my effort—to be used if you approve, but not otherwise.[1]]

We shall try to find a tenant for our Hartford house; not an easy matter, for it costs heavily to live in. We can never live in it again; though it would break the family's hearts if they could believe it.

Nothing daunts Mrs. Clemens or makes the world look black to her—which is the reason I haven't drowned myself.

I got the Xmas journals which you sent and I thank you for that Xmas remembrance.

We all send our deepest and warmest greetings to you and all of yours and a Happy New Year!

S. L. CLEMENS.

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[1] Bram Stoker and Sir Henry Irving had each taken a small interest in the machine. The inclosure for Stoker ran as follows:

MY DEAR STOKER,—I am not dating this, because it is not to be mailed at present.

When it reaches you it will mean that there is a hitch in my machine enterprise—a hitch so serious as to make it take to itself the aspect of a dissolved dream. This letter, then, will contain cheque for the $100 which you have paid. And will you tell Irving for me—I can't get up courage enough to talk about this misfortune myself, except to you, whom by good luck I haven't damaged yet—that when the wreckage presently floats ashore he will get a good deal of his $500 back; and a dab at a time I will make up to him the rest.

I'm not feeling as fine as I was when I saw you there in your home. Please remember me kindly to Mrs. Stoker. I gave up that London lecture-project entirely. Had to—there's never been a chance since to find the time.

Sincerely yours,
S. L. CLEMENS.

A week later he added what was about his final word on the subject:

> Yours of December 21 has arrived, containing the circular to stockholders, and I guess the Co. will really quit—there doesn't seem to be any other wise course.
>
> There's one thing which makes it difficult for me to soberly realize that my ten-year dream is actually dissolved; and that is that it reverses my horoscope. The proverb says, "Born lucky, *always* lucky. It was usual for one or two of our lads (per annum) to get drowned in the Mississippi or in Bear Creek, but I was pulled out in a $\frac{2}{3}$ drowned condition 9 times before I learned to swim, and was considered to be a cat in disguise. When the *Pennsylvania* blew up and the telegraph reported my brother as fatally injured (with 60 others) but made no mention of me, my uncle said to my mother "it means that Sam was somewhere else, after being on that boat a year and a half—he was born lucky." Yes, I *was* somewhere else. I am so superstitious that I have always been afraid to have business dealings with certain relatives and friends of mine because they were unlucky people. All my life I have stumbled upon lucky chances of large size, and whenever they were wasted it was because of my own stupidity and carelessness. And so I have felt entirely certain that the machine would turn up trumps eventually. It disappointed me lots of times, but I couldn't shake off the confidence of a lifetime in my luck.
>
> Well, whatever I get out of the wreckage will be due to good luck—the good luck of getting you into the scheme—for, but for that there wouldn't *be* any wreckage; it would be total loss.
>
> I wish you had been in at the beginning. Then we should have had the good luck to step promptly ashore.

So it was that the other great interest died and was put away forever. Clemens scarcely ever mentioned it again, even to members of his family. It was a dead issue; it was only a pity that it had ever seemed a live one. A combination known as the Regius Company took over Paige's interest, but accomplished nothing. Eventually—irony of fate—the Mergenthaler Company, so long scorned and derided, for twenty thousand dollars bought out the rights and assets and presented that marvelous work of genius, the mechanical wonder of the age, to the Sibley College of Engineering, where it is shown as the costliest piece of machinery, for its size, ever constructed. Mark Twain once received a letter from an author who had written a book calculated to assist inventors and patentees, asking for his indorsement. He replied:

> DEAR SIR,—I have, as you say, been interested in patents and patentees. If your books tell how to exterminate inventors send me nine editions. Send them by express.
>
> Very truly yours,
>
> S. L. CLEMENS.

The collapse of the "great hope" meant to the Clemens household that their struggle with debt was to continue, that their economies were to become more rigid. In a letter on her wedding anniversary, February 2 (1895), Mrs. Clemens wrote to her sister:

> As I was starting down the stairs for my breakfast this morning Mr. Clemens called me back and took out a five-franc piece and gave it to me, saying: "It is our silver-wedding day, and so I give you a present."

It was a symbol of their reduced circumstances—of the change that twenty-five years had brought.

Literary matters, however, prospered. The new book progressed amazingly. The worst had happened; other and distracting interests were dead. He was deep in the third part—the story of Joan's trial and condemnation, and he forgot most other things in his determination to make that one a reality.

As at Viviani, Clemens read his chapters to the family circle. The story was drawing near the end now; tragedy was closing in on the frail martyr; the farce of her trial was wringing their hearts. Susy would say, "Wait, wait till I get a handkerchief," and one night when the last pages had been written and read, and Joan had made the supreme expiation for devotion to a paltry king, Susy wrote in her diary, "To-night Joan of Arc was burned at the stake," meaning that the book was finished.

Susy herself had literary taste and might have written had it not been that she desired to sing. There are fragments of her writing that show the true literary touch. Her father, in an unpublished article which he once wrote of her, quoted a paragraph, doubtless intended some day to take its place at the end of a story:

> And now at last when they lie at rest they must go hence. It is always so. Completion, perfection, satisfaction attained—a human life has fulfilled its earthly destiny. Poor human life! It may not pause and rest, for it must hasten on to other realms and greater consummations.

She was a deep reader, and she had that wonderful gift of brilliant, flowing, scintillating speech. From her father she had inherited a rare faculty of oral expression, born of a superior depth of mind, swiftness and clearness of comprehension, combined with rapid, brilliant, and forceful phrasing. Her father wrote of her gift:

> Sometimes in those days of swift development her speech was rocket-like for vividness and for the sense it carried of visibility. I seem to see it stream into the sky and burst full in a shower of colored fire.

We are dwelling here a moment on Susy, for she was at her best that winter.

She was more at home than the others. Her health did not permit her to go out so freely and her father had more of her companionship. They discussed many things —the problems of life and of those beyond life, philosophies of many kinds, and the subtleties of literary art. He recalled long after how once they lost themselves in trying to solve the mystery of the emotional effect of certain word-combinations—certain phrases and lines of verse—as, for instance, the wild, free breath of the open that one feels in "the days when we went gipsying a long time ago" and the tender, sunlit, grassy slope and mossy headstones suggested by the simple words, "departed this life." Both Susy and her father cared more for *Joan* than any of the former books. To Mr. Rogers, Clemens wrote:

"Possibly the book may not sell, but that is nothing—it was written for love." A memorandum which he made at the time, apparently for no one but himself, brings us very close to the personality behind it.

> Do you know that shock? I mean when you come at your regular hour into the sick-room where you have watched for months and find the medicine-bottles all gone, the night-table removed, the bed stripped, the furniture set stiffly to rights, the windows up, the room cold, stark, vacant—& you catch your breath & realize what has happened.
>
> Do you know that shock?
>
> The man who has written a long book has that experience the morning after he has revised it for the last time & sent it away to the printer. He steps into his study at the hour established by the habit of months—& he gets that little shock. All the litter & confusion are gone. The piles of dusty reference-books are gone from the chairs, the maps from the floor; the chaos of letters, manuscripts, note-books, paper-knives, pipes, matches, photographs, tobacco-jars, & cigar-boxes is gone from the writing-table, the furniture is back where it used to be in the long-ago. The housemaid, forbidden the place for five months, has been there & tidied it up & scoured it clean & made it repellent & awful.
>
> I stand here this morning contemplating this desolation, & I realize that if I would bring back the spirit that made this hospital home-like & pleasant to me I must restore the aids to lingering dissolution to their wonted places & nurse another patient through & send it forth for the last rites, with many or few to assist there, as may happen; & that I will do.

SUSY CLEMENS
("Megalopis")—in 1873

SUSY CLEMENS
About the time when she wrote
the "Biography")

SUSY CLEMENS AT BRYN MAWR IN 1890–91

CXC

STARTING ON THE LONG TRAIL

THE tragedy of *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, with its splendid illustrations by Louis Loeb, having finished its course in the *Century Magazine*, had been issued by the American Publishing Company. It proved not one of Mark Twain's great books, but only one of his good books. From first to last it is interesting, and there are strong situations and chapters finely written. The character of Roxy is thoroughly alive, and her weird relationship with her half-breed son is startling enough. There are not many situations in fiction stronger than that where half-breed Tom sells his mother down the river into slavery. The negro character is well drawn, of course—Mark Twain could not write it less than well, but its realism is hardly to be compared with similar matter in his other books—in *Tom Sawyer*, for instance, or *Huck Finn*. With the exceptions of Tom, Roxy, and Pudd'nhead the characters are slight. The Twins are mere bodiless names that might have been eliminated altogether. The character of Pudd'nhead Wilson is lovable and fine, and his final triumph at the murder trial is thrilling in the extreme. Identification by thumb-marks was a new feature in fiction then—in law, too, for that matter. But it is chiefly Pudd'nhead Wilson's maxims, run at the head of each chapter, that will stick in the memory of men. Perhaps the book would live without these, but with them it is certainly immortal.

Such aphorisms as: "Nothing so needs reforming as other people's habits"; "Few things are harder to put up with than the annoyance of a good example"; "When angry count four, and when very angry swear," cannot perish; these, with the forty or so others in this volume and the added collection of rare philosophies that head the chapters of *Following the Equator*, have insured to Philosopher Pudd'nhead a respectful hearing for all time.[1]

Clemens had meant to begin another book, but he decided first to make a trip to America, to give some personal attention to publishing matters there. They were a good deal confused. The Harpers had arranged for the serial and book publication of *Joan*, and were negotiating for the Webster contracts. Mr. Rogers was devoting priceless time in an effort to establish amicable relations between the Harpers and the American Company at Hartford so that they could work on some general basis that would be satisfactory and profitable to all concerned. It was time that Clemens was on the scene of action. He sailed on the *New York* on the 23d of February, and a little more than a month later returned by the *Paris*—that is, at the end of March. By this time he had altogether a new thought. It was necessary to earn a large sum of money as promptly as possible, and he adopted the plan which twice before in his life—in 1872 and in 1884—had supplied him with needed funds. Loathing the platform as he did, he was going back to it. Major Pond had proposed a lecture tour soon after his failure.

"The loss of a fortune is tough," wrote Pond, "but there are other resources for another fortune. You and I will make the tour together."

Now he had resolved to make a tour—one that even

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[1] The story of *Pudd'nhead Wilson* was dramatized by Frank Mayo, who played it successfully as long as he lived. It is by no means dead, and still pays a royalty to the Mayo and Clemens estates.

Pond himself had not contemplated. He would go platforming around the world! He would take Pond with him as far as the Pacific coast, arranging with some one equally familiar with the lecture circuit on the other side of the Pacific. He had heard of R. S. Smythe, who had personally conducted Henry M. Stanley and other great lecturers through Australia and the East, and he wrote immediately, asking information and advice concerning such a tour. Clemens himself has told us in one of his chapters how his mental message found its way to Smythe long before his written one, and how Smythe's letter, proposing just such a trip, crossed his own.

He sailed for America with the family on the 11th of May, and a little more than a week later, after four years of exile, they found themselves once more at beautiful Quarry Farm. We may imagine how happy they were to reach that peaceful haven. Mrs. Clemens had written:

"It is, in a way, hard to go home and feel that we are not able to open our house. But it is an immense delight to me to think of seeing our friends."

Little at the farm was changed. There were more vines on the home—the study was overgrown—that was all. Even Ellerslie remained as the children had left it, with all the small comforts and utensils in place. Most of the old friends were there; only Mrs. Langdon and Theodore Crane were missing. The Beechers drove up to see them, as formerly, and the old discussions on life and immortality were taken up in the old places.

Mrs. Beecher once came with some curious thin layers of leaves of stone which she had found, knowing Mark Twain's interest in geology. Later, when they had been discussing the usual problems, he said he would write an agreement on those imperishable leaves, to be laid away until the ages should solve their problems. He wrote it in verse:

If you prove right and I prove wrong,
  A million years from now,
In language plain and frank and strong
  My error I'll avow
    To your dear waking face.

If I prove right, by God His grace,
  Full sorry I shall be,
For in that solitude no trace
  There'll be of you and me.

A million years, O patient stone,
  You've waited for this message.
Deliver it a million hence;
  (Survivor pays expressage.)

Mark Twain.

Contract with Mrs. T. K. Beecher, July 2, 1895.

Pond came to Elmira and the route westward was arranged. Clemens decided to give selections from his books, as he had done with Cable, and to start without much delay. He dreaded the prospect of setting out on that long journey alone, nor could Mrs. Clemens find it in her heart to consent to such a plan. It was bitterly hard to know what to do, but it was decided at last that she and one of the elder daughters should accompany him, the others remaining with their aunt at Quarry Farm. Susy, who had the choice, dreaded ocean travel, and felt that she would be happier and healthier to rest in the quiet of that peaceful hilltop. She elected to remain with her aunt and Jean; and it fell to Clara to go. Major Pond and his wife would accompany them as far as Vancouver. They left Elmira on the night of the 14th of July. When the train pulled away their last glimpse was of Susy, standing with the others under the electric light of the railway platform, waving them good-by.

CXCI

ON THE WAY AROUND THE WORLD

CLEMENS had been ill in Elmira with a distressing carbuncle, and was still in no condition to undertake steady travel and entertainment in that fierce summer heat. He was fearful of failure. "I sha'n't be able to stand on a platform," he wrote Mr. Rogers; but they pushed along steadily with few delays. They began in Cleveland, thence by the Great Lakes, traveling by steamer from one point to another, going constantly, with readings at every important point—Duluth, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Winnipeg, Butte, and through the great Northwest, arriving at Vancouver at last on August 16th, but one day behind schedule time.

It had been a hot, blistering journey, but of immense interest, for none of them had traveled through the Northwest, and the wonder and grandeur of it all, its scenery, its bigness, its mighty agriculture, impressed them. Clemens in his notes refers more than once to the "seas" and "ocean" of wheat.

> There is the peace of the ocean about it and a deep contentment, a heaven-wide sense of ampleness, spaciousness, where pettiness and all small thoughts and tempers must be out of place, not suited to it, and so not intruding. The scattering, far-off homesteads, with trees about them, were so homelike and remote from the warring world, so reposeful and enticing. The most distant and faintest under the horizon suggested fading ships at sea.

The Lake travel impressed him; the beauties and cleanliness of the Lake steamers, which he compares with those of Europe, to the disadvantage of the latter. Entering Port Huron he wrote:

> The long approach through narrow ways with flat grass and wooded land on both sides, and on the left a continuous row of summer cottages, with small-boat accommodations for visiting across the little canals from family to family, the groups of summer-dressed young people all along waving flags and handkerchiefs and firing cannon, our boat replying with toots of the hoarse whistle and now and then a cannon, and meeting steamers in the narrow way, and once the stately sister-ship of the line crowded with summer-dressed people waving—the rich browns and greens of the rush-grown, far-reaching flatlands, with little glimpses of water away on their farther edges, the sinking sun throwing a crinkled broad carpet of gold on the water—well, it is the perfection of voyaging.

It had seemed a doubtful experiment to start with Mrs. Clemens on that journey in the summer heat; but, strange to say, her health improved, and she reached Vancouver by no means unfit for the long voyage ahead. No doubt the change and continuous interest and their splendid welcome everywhere and their prosperity were accountable. Everywhere they were entertained; flowers filled their rooms; carriages and committees were always waiting. It was known that Mark Twain had set out for the purpose of paying his debts, and no cause would make a deeper appeal to his countrymen than that, or, for that matter, to the world at large.

From Winnipeg he wrote to Mr. Rogers:

> At the end of an hour and a half I offered to let the audience go, but they said "go on," and I did.

He had five thousand dollars to forward to Rogers to place against his debt account by the time he reached the Coast, a fine return for a month's travel in that deadly season. At no more than two places were the houses less than crowded. One of these was Anaconda, then a small place, which they visited only because the manager of the entertainment hall there had known Clemens somewhere back in the sixties and was eager to have him. He failed to secure the amount of the guarantee required by Pond, and when Pond reported to Clemens that he had taken "all he had" Clemens said:

"And you took the last cent that poor fellow had. Send him one hundred dollars, and if you can't afford to stand your share charge it all to me. I'm not going around robbing my friends who are disappointed in my commercial value. I don't want to get money that way."

"I sent the money," said Pond afterward, "and was glad of the privilege of standing my share."

Clemens himself had not been in the best of health during the trip. He had contracted a heavy cold and did not seem to gain strength. But in a presentation copy of *Roughing It*, given to Pond as a souvenir, he wrote:

"Here ends one of the smoothest and pleasantest trips across the continent that any group of five has ever made."

There were heavy forest fires in the Northwest that year, and smoke everywhere. The steamer *Warrimoo*, which was to have sailed on the 16th, went aground in the smoke, and was delayed a week. While they were waiting, Clemens lectured in Victoria, with the Governor-General and Lady Aberdeen and their little son in the audience. His note-book says:

> They came in at 8.45, 15 minutes late; wish they would always be present, for it isn't permissible to begin until they come; by that time the late-comers are all in.

Clemens wrote a number of final letters from Vancouver. In one of them to Mr. J. Henry Harper, of Harper & Brothers, he expressed the wish that his name might now be printed as the author of "Joan," which had begun serially in the April *Magazine*. He thought it might help his lecturing tour and keep his name alive. But a few days later, with Mrs. Clemens's help, he had reconsidered, and wrote:

> My wife is a little troubled by my wanting my *nom de plume* put to the "Joan of Arc" so soon. She thinks it might go counter to your plans, and that you ought to be left free and unhampered in the matter.
>
> All right—so be it. I wasn't strenuous about it, and wasn't meaning to insist; I only thought my reasons were good, and I really think so yet, though I do confess the weight and fairness of *hers*.

As a matter of fact the authorship of "Joan" had been pretty generally guessed by the second or third issue. Certain of its phrasing and humor could hardly have come from another pen than Mark Twain's. The authorship was not openly acknowledged, however, until the publication of the book, the following May.

Among the letters from Vancouver was this one to Rudyard Kipling:

> DEAR KIPLING,—It is reported that you are about to visit India. This has moved me to journey to that far country in order that I may unload from my conscience a debt long due to you. Years ago you came from India to Elmira to visit me, as you said at the time. It has always been my purpose to return that visit & that great compliment some day. I shall arrive next January & you must be ready. I shall come riding my ayah with his tusks adorned with silver bells & ribbons & escorted by a troop of native howdahs richly clad & mounted upon a herd of wild bungalows; & you must be on hand with a few bottles of ghee, for I shall be thirsty.

To the press he gave this parting statement:

> It has been reported that I sacrificed for the benefit of the creditors the property of the publishing firm whose financial backer I was and that I am now lecturing for my own benefit.

This is an error. I intend the lectures as well as the property for the creditors. The law recognizes no mortgage on a man's brain, and a merchant who has given up all he has may take advantage of the laws of insolvency and start free again for himself. But I am not a business man, and honor is a harder master than the law. It cannot compromise for less than 100 cents on the dollar and its debts never outlaw. From my reception thus far on my lecturing tour I am confident that if I live I can pay off the last debt within four years, after which, at the age of sixty-four, I can make a fresh and unincumbered start in life. I am going to Australia, India, and South Africa, and next year I hope to make a tour of the great cities of the United States. I meant, when I began, to give my creditors all the benefit of this, but I am beginning to feel that I am gaining something from it, too, and that my dividends, if not available for banking purposes, may be even more satisfactory than theirs.

There was one creditor, whose name need not be "handed down to infamy," who had refused to consent to any settlement except immediate payment in full, and had pursued with threatened attachment of earnings and belongings, until Clemens, exasperated, had been disposed to turn over to his creditors all remaining properties and let that suffice, once and for all. But this was momentary. He had presently instructed Mr. Rogers to "pay Shylock in full," and to assure any others that he would pay them, too, in the end. But none of the others annoyed him.

It was on the afternoon of August 23, 1895, that they were off at last. Major Pond and his wife lunched with them on board and waved them good-by as long as they could see the vessel. The far voyage which was to carry them for the better part of the year to the under side of the world had begun.

CXCII

"FOLLOWING THE EQUATOR"

MARK TWAIN himself has written with great fulness the story of that traveling—setting down what happened, and mainly *as* it happened, with all the wonderful description, charm, and color of which he was so great a master. We need do little more than summarize then—adding a touch here and there, perhaps, from another point of view.

They had expected to stop at the Sandwich Islands, but when they arrived in the roadstead of Honolulu, word came that cholera had broken out and many were dying daily. They could not land. It was a double disappointment; not only were the lectures lost, but Clemens had long looked forward to revisiting the islands he had so loved in the days of his youth. There was nothing for them to do but to sit on the decks in the shade of the awnings and look at the distant shore. In his book he says:

> We lay in luminous blue water; shoreward the water was green—green and brilliant; at the shore itself it broke in a long, white ruffle, and with no crash, no sound that we could hear. The town was buried under a mat of foliage that looked like a cushion of moss. The silky mountains were clothed in soft, rich splendors of melting color, and some of the cliffs were veiled in slanting mists. I recognized it all. It was just as I had seen it long before, with nothing of its beauty lost, nothing of its charm wanting.

In his note-book he wrote: "If I might, I would go ashore and never leave."

This was the 31st of August. Two days later they were off again, sailing over the serene Pacific, bearing to the southwest for Australia. They crossed the equator, which he says was wisely put where it is, because if it had been run through Europe all the kings would have tried to grab it. They crossed it September 6th, and he notes that Clara kodaked it. A day or two later the north star disappeared behind them and the constellation of the Cross came into view above the southern horizon. Then presently they were among the islands of the southern Pacific, and landed for a little time on one of the Fiji group. They had twenty-four days of halcyon voyaging between Vancouver and Sydney with only one rough day. A ship's passengers get closely acquainted on a trip of that length and character. They mingle in all sorts of diversions to while away the time; and at the end have become like friends of many years.

On the night of September 15th—a night so dark that from the ship's deck one could not see the water—schools of porpoises surrounded the ship, setting the water alive with phosphorescent splendors: "Like glorified serpents thirty to fifty feet long. Every curve of the tapering long body perfect. The whole snake dazzlingly illumined. It was a weird sight to see this sparkling ghost come suddenly flashing along out of the solid gloom and stream past like a meteor."

They were in Sydney next morning, September 16, 1895, and landed in a pouring rain, the breaking up of a fierce drought. Clemens announced that he had brought Australia good-fortune, and should expect something in return.

Mr. Smythe was ready for them and there was no time lost in getting to work. All Australia was ready for them, in fact, and nowhere in their own country were they more lavishly and royally received than in that far-away Pacific continent. Crowded houses, ovations, and gorgeous entertainment—public and private—were the fashion, and a little more than two weeks after arrival Clemens was able to send back another two thousand dollars to apply on his debts. But he had hard luck, too, for another carbuncle developed at Melbourne and kept him laid up for nearly a week. When he was able to go before an audience again he said:

"The doctor says I am on the verge of being a sick man. Well, that may be true enough while I am lying abed all day trying to persuade his cantankerous, rebellious medicines to agree with each other; but when I come out at night and get a welcome like this I feel as young and healthy as anybody, and as to being on the verge of being a sick man I don't take any stock in that. I have been on the verge of being an angel all my life, but it's never happened yet."

In his book Clemens has told us his joy in Australia, his interest in the perishing native tribes, in the wonderfully governed cities, in the gold-mines, and in the advanced industries. The climate he thought superb; "a darling climate," he says in a note-book entry.

Perhaps one ought to give a little idea of the character of his entertainment. His readings were mainly from his earlier books, *Roughing It* and *Innocents Abroad.* The story of the dead man which, as a boy, he had discovered in his father's office was one that he often told, and the "Mexican Plug" and his "Meeting with Artemus Ward" and the story of Jim Blaine's old ram; now and again he gave chapters from *Huck Finn* and *Tom Sawyer.* He was likely to finish with that old fireside tale of his early childhood, the "Golden Arm." But he sometimes told the watermelon story, written for Mrs. Rogers, or gave extracts from *Adam's Diary*, varying his program a good deal as he went along, and changing it entirely where he appeared twice in one city.

Mrs. Clemens and Clara, as often as they had heard him, generally went when the hour of entertainment came. They enjoyed seeing his triumph with the different audiences, watching the effect of his subtle art.

One story, the "Golden Arm," had in it a pause, an effective, delicate pause which must be timed to the fraction of a second in order to realize its full value. Somewhere before we have stated that no one better than Mark Twain knew the value of a pause. Mrs. Clemens and Clara were willing to go night after night and hear that tale time and again, for its effect on each new audience.

From Australia to New Zealand—where Clemens had his third persistent carbuncle,[1] and again lost time in consequence. It was while he was in bed with this distressing ailment that he wrote Twichell:

> I think it was a good stroke of luck that knocked me on my back here at Napier instead of in some hotel in the center of a noisy city. Here we have the smooth & placidly complaining sea at our door, with nothing between us & it but 20 yards of shingle—& hardly a suggestion of life in that space to mar it or to make a noise. Away down here fifty-five degrees south of the equator this sea seems to murmur in an unfamiliar tongue—a foreign tongue—a tongue bred among the ice-fields of the antarctic — a murmur with a note of melancholy in it proper to the vast unvisited solitudes it has come from. It was very delicious and solacing to wake in the night & find it still pulsing there. I wish you were here—land, but it would be fine!

Mrs. Clemens and himself both had birthdays in New Zealand; Clemens turned sixty, and his wife passed the half-century mark.

"I do not like it one single bit," she wrote to her sister. "Fifty years old—think of it; that seems very far on."

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[1] In *Following the Equator* the author says: "The dictionary says a carbuncle is a kind of jewel. Humor is out of place in a dictionary."

And Clemens wrote:

> Day before yesterday was Livy's birthday (underworld time) & to-morrow will be mine. I shall be 60—no thanks for it!

From New Zealand back to Australia, and then with the new year away to Ceylon. Here they were in the Orient at last, the land of color, enchantment, and gentle races. Clemens was ill with a heavy cold when they arrived; and in fact, at no time during this long journeying was his health as good as that of his companions. The papers usually spoke of him as looking frail, and he was continually warned that he must not remain in India until the time of the great heat. He was so determined to work, however, and working was so profitable, that he seldom spared himself.

He traveled up and down and back and forth the length and breadth of India—from Bombay to Allahabad, to Benares, to Calcutta and Darjeeling, to Lahore, to Lucknow, to Delhi—old cities of romance—and to Jeypore—through the heat and dust on poor, comfortless railways, fighting his battle and enjoying it too, for he reveled in that amazing land—its gorgeous, swarming life, the patience and gentleness of its servitude, its splendid pageantry, the magic of its architecture, the maze and mystery of its religions, the wonder of its ageless story.

One railway trip he enjoyed—a thirty-five-mile flight down the steep mountain of Darjeeling in a little canopied hand-car. In his book he says:

> That was the most enjoyable time I have spent in the earth. For rousing, tingling, rapturous pleasure there is no holiday trip that approaches the bird-flight down the Himalayas in a hand-car. It has no fault, no blemish, no lack, except that there are only thirty-five miles of it, instead of five hundred.

Mark Twain found India all that Rudyard Kipling had painted it and more. "INDIA THE MARVELOUS" he printed in his note-book in large capitals, as an effort to picture his thought, and in his book he wrote:

> So far as I am able to judge nothing has been left undone, either by man or Nature, to make India the most extraordinary country that the sun visits on his rounds. "Where every prospect pleases, and only man is vile."

Marvelous India is, certainly; and he saw it all to the best advantage, for government official and native grandee spared no effort to do honor to his party—to make their visit something to be remembered for a lifetime. It was all very gratifying, and most of it of extraordinary interest. There are not many visitors who get to see the inner household of a native prince of India, and the letter which Mark Twain wrote to Kumar Shri Samatsinhji, a prince of the Palitana state, at Bombay, gives us a notion of how his unostentatious, even if lavish, hospitality was appreciated.

> DEAR KUMAR SAHIB,—It would be hard for me to put into words how much my family & I enjoyed our visit to your hospitable house. It was our first glimpse of the home of an Eastern Prince, & the charm of it, the grace & beauty & dignity of it realized to us the pictures which we had long ago gathered from books of travel & Oriental tales. We shall not forget that happy experience, nor your kind courtesies to us, nor those of her Highness to my wife & daughter. We shall keep always the portrait & the beautiful things you gave us; & as long as we live a glance at them will bring your house and its life & its sumptuous belongings & rich harmonies of color instantly across the years & the oceans, & we shall see them again, & how welcome they will be!
>
> We make our salutation to your Highness & to all members of your family—including, with affectionate regard, that littlest little sprite of a Princess—& I beg to sign myself
>
> Sincerely yours,
>
> S. L. CLEMENS.
>
> BENARES, *February 5, 1896.*

They had been entertained in truly royal fashion by Prince Kumar, who, after refreshments, had ordered in "bales of rich stuffs" in the true Arabian Nights fashion, and commanded his servants to open them and allow his guests to select for themselves.

With the possible exception of General Grant's long trip in '78 and '79 there has hardly been a more royal progress than Mark Twain's trip around the world. Everywhere they were overwhelmed with honors and invitations, and their gifts became so many that Mrs. Clemens wrote she did not see how they were going to carry them all. In a sense, it was like the Grant trip, for it was a tribute which the nations paid not only to a beloved personality, but to the American character and people.

The story of that East Indian sojourn alone would fill a large book, and Mark Twain, in his own way, has written that book, in the second volume of *Following the Equator*, an informing, absorbing, and enchanting story of Indian travel.

Clemens lectured everywhere to jammed houses, which were rather less profitable than in Australia, because in India the houses were not built for such audiences as he could command. He had to lecture three times in Calcutta, and then many people were turned away. At one place, however, his hall was large enough. This was in the great Hall of the Palace, where durbars are held, at Bombay.

Altogether they were two months in India, and then about the middle of March an English physician at Jeypore warned them to fly for Calcutta and get out of the country immediately before the real heat set in.

They sailed toward the end of March, touched at Madras and again at Ceylon, remaining a day or two at Colombo, and then away to sea again, across the Indian Ocean on one of those long, peaceful, eventless, tropic voyages, where at night one sleeps on deck and in daytime wears the whitest and lightest garments and cares to do little more than sit drowsily in a steamer-chair and read and doze and dream.

From the note-book:

Here in the wastes of the Indian Ocean just under the equator the sea is blue, the motion gentle, the sunshine brilliant, the broad decks with their grouped companies of talking, reading, or game-playing folk suggestive of a big summer hotel—but outside of the ship is no life visible but the occasional flash of a flying-fish. I would like the voyage, under these conditions, to continue forever.

The Injian Ocean sits and smiles
  So sof', so bright, so bloomin' blue,
There aren't a wave for miles an' miles
  Excep' the jiggle of the screw. —KIP.

How curiously unanecdotical the colonials and the ship-going English are—I believe I haven't told an anecdote or heard one since I left America, but Americans when grouped drop into anecdotes as soon as they get a little acquainted.

Preserve your illusions. When they are gone you may still exist, but not live.

Swore off from profanity early this morning—I was on deck in the peaceful dawn, the calm of holy dawn. Went down, dressed, bathed, put on white linen, shaved—a long, hot, troublesome job and no profanity. Then started to breakfast. Remembered my tonic—first time in 3 months without being told—poured it into measuring-glass, held bottle in one hand, it in the other, the cork in my teeth—reached up & got a tumbler—measuring-glass slipped out of my fingers—caught it, poured out another dose, first setting the tumbler on wash-stand—just got it poured, ship lurched, heard a crash behind me—it was the tumbler, broken into millions of fragments, but the bottom hunk whole. Picked it up to throw out of the open port, threw out the measuring-glass instead—then I released my voice. Mrs. Clemens behind me in the door.

"Don't reform any more. It is not an improvement."

> This is a good time to read up on scientific matters and improve the mind, for about us is the peace of the great deep. It invites to dreams, to study, to reflection. Seventeen days ago this ship sailed out of Calcutta, and ever since, barring a day or two in Ceylon, there has been nothing in sight but the tranquil blue sea & a cloudless blue sky. All down the Bay of Bengal it was so. It is still so in the vast solitudes of the Indian Ocean—17 days of heaven. In 11 more it will end. There will be one passenger who will be sorry. One reads all day long in this delicious air. To-day I have been storing up knowledge from Sir John Lubbock about the ant. The thing which has struck me most and most astonished me is the ant's extraordinary powers of identification—memory of his friend's person. I will quote something which he says about *Formica fusca*. *Formica fusca* is not something to eat; it's the name of a breed of ants.

He does quote at great length and he transferred most of it later to his book. In another note he says:

> In the past year have read *Vicar of Wakefield* and some of Jane Austen—thoroughly artificial. Have begun *Children of the Abbey*. It begins with this "Impromptu" from the sentimental heroine:
>
> "Hail, sweet asylum of my infancy! Content and innocence reside beneath your humble roof and charity unboastful of the good it renders. . . . Here unmolested may I wait till the rude storm of sorrow is overblown and my father's arms are again extended to receive me."
>
> Has the ear-marks of preparation.

They were at the island of Mauritius by the middle of April, that curious bit of land mainly known to the world in the romance of *Paul and Virginia*, a story supposed by some in Mauritius to be "a part of the Bible." They rested there for a fortnight and then set sail for South Africa on the ship *Arundel Castle*, which he tells us is the finest boat he has seen in those waters.

It was the end of the first week in May when they reached Durban and felt that they were nearing home.

One more voyage and they would be in England, where they had planned for Susy and Jean to join them.

Mrs. Clemens, eager for letters, writes of her disappointment in not finding one from Susy. The reports from Quarry Farm had been cheerful, and there had been small snap-shot photographs which were comforting, but her mother heart could not be entirely satisfied that Susy did not send letters. She had a vague fear that some trouble, some illness, had come to Susy which made her loath to write. Susy was, in fact, far from well, though no one, not even Susy herself, suspected how serious was her condition.

Mrs. Clemens writes of her own hopefulness, but adds that her husband is often depressed.

> Mr. Clemens has not as much courage as I wish he had, but, poor old darling, he has been pursued with colds and inabilities of various sorts. Then he is so impressed with the fact that he is sixty years old. Naturally I combat that thought all I can, trying to make him rejoice that he is not seventy. . . .
>
> He does not believe that any good thing will come, but that we must all our lives live in poverty. He says he never wants to go back to America. I cannot think that things are as black as he paints them, and I trust that if I get him settled down for work in some quiet English village he will get back much of his cheerfulness; in fact, I believe he will because that is what he wants to do, and that is the work that he loves. The platform he likes for the two hours that he is on it, but all the rest of the time it grinds him, and he says he is ashamed of what he is doing. Still, in spite of this sad undercurrent, we are having a delightful trip. People are so nice, and with people Mr. Clemens seems cheerful. Then the ocean trips are a great rest to him.

Mrs. Clemens and Clara remained at the hotel in Durban while Clemens made his platform trip to the South African cities. It was just at the time when the Transvaal invasion had been put down—when the Jameson raid had come to grief and John Hayes Hammond, chief of the reformers, and fifty or more supporters were lying in the jail at Pretoria under various sentences, ranging from one to fifteen years, Hammond himself having received the latter award. Mrs. Hammond was a fellow-Missourian; Clemens had known her in America. He went with her now to see the prisoners, who seemed to be having a pretty good time, expecting to be pardoned presently; pretending to regard their confinement mainly as a joke. Clemens, writing of it to Twichell, said:

> A Boer guard was at my elbow all the time, but was courteous & polite, only he barred the way in the compound (quadrangle or big open court) & wouldn't let me cross a white mark that was on the ground—the "death-line," one of the prisoners called it. Not in earnest, though, I think. I found that I had met Hammond once when he was a Yale senior & a guest of General Franklin's. I also found that I had known Captain Mein intimately 32 years ago. One of the English prisoners had heard me lecture in London 23 years ago. . . .
>
> These prisoners are strong men, prominent men, & I believe they are all educated men. They are well off; some of them are wealthy. They have a lot of books to read, they play games & smoke, & for a while they will be able to bear up in their captivity; but not for long, not for very long, I take it. I am told they have times of deadly brooding and depression. I made them a speech—sitting down. It just happened so. I don't prefer that attitude. Still, it has one advantage—it is only a *talk*, it doesn't take the form of a speech. . . . I advised them at considerable length to stay where they were—they would get used to it & like it presently; if they got out they would only get in again somewhere else, by the look of their countenances; & I promised to go and see the President & do what I could to get him to double their jail terms. . . .
>
> We had a very good sociable time till the permitted time was up & a little over & we outsiders had to go. I went again to-day, but the Rev. Mr. Gray had just arrived, & the warden, a genial, elderly Boer named Du Plessis, explained that his orders wouldn't allow him to admit saint & sinner at the same time, particularly on a Sunday. Du Plessis descended from the Huguenot fugi-

tives, you see, of 200 years ago—but he hasn't any French left in him now—all Dutch.

Clemens did visit President Kruger a few days later, but not for the purpose explained. John Hayes Hammond, in a speech not long ago (1911), told how Mark Twain was interviewed by a reporter after he left the jail, and when the reporter asked if the prisoners were badly treated Clemens had replied that he didn't think so, adding:

"As a matter of fact, a great many of these gentlemen have fared far worse in the hotels and mining-camps of the West."

Said Hammond in his speech: "The result of this was that the interview was reported literally and a leader appeared in the next morning's issue protesting against such lenience. The privations, already severe enough, were considerably augmented by that remark, and it required some three or four days' search on the part of some of our friends who were already outside of jail to get hold of Mark Twain and have him go and explain to Kruger that it was all a joke."

Clemens made as good a plea to "Oom Paul" as he could, and in some degree may have been responsible for the improved treatment and the shortened terms of the unlucky reformers.

They did not hurry away from South Africa. Clemens gave many readings and paid a visit to the Kimberley mines. His note-book recalls how poor Riley twenty-five years before had made his fatal journey.

It was the 14th of July, 1896, a year to a day since they left Elmira, that they sailed by the steamer *Norman* for England, arriving at Southampton the 31st. It was from Southampton that they had sailed for America fourteen months before. They had completed the circuit of the globe.

CXCIII

THE PASSING OF SUSY

IT had been arranged that Katie Leary should bring Jean and Susy to England. It was expected that they would arrive soon, not later than the 12th, by which time the others would be established. The travelers proceeded immediately to London and engaged for the summer a house in Guildford, modest quarters, for they were still economizing, though Mark Twain had reason to hope that with the money already earned and the profits of the book he would write of his travels he could pay himself free. Altogether, the trip had been prosperous. Now that it was behind him, his health and spirits had improved. The outlook was brighter.

August 12th came, but it did not bring Katie and the children. A letter came instead. Clemens long afterward wrote:

> It explained that Susy was slightly ill—nothing of consequence. But we were disquieted and began to cable for later news. This was Friday. All day no answer—and the ship to leave Southampton next day at noon. Clara and her mother began packing, to be ready in case the news should be bad. Finally came a cablegram saying, "Wait for cablegram in the morning." This was not satisfactory—not reassuring. I cabled again, asking that the answer be sent to Southampton, for the day was now closing. I waited in the post-office that night till the doors were closed, toward midnight, in the hope that good news might still come, but there was no message. We sat silent at home till one in the morning waiting—waiting for

we knew not what. Then we took the earlier morning train, and when we reached Southampton the message was there. It said the recovery would be long but certain. This was a great relief to me, but not to my wife. She was frightened. She and Clara went aboard the steamer at once and sailed for America to nurse Susy. I remained behind to search for another and larger house in Guildford.

That was the 15th of August, 1896. Three days later, when my wife and Clara were about half-way across the ocean, I was standing in our dining-room, thinking of nothing in particular, when a cablegram was put into my hand. It said, "Susy was peacefully released to-day."

Some of those who in later years wondered at Mark Twain's occasional attitude of pessimism and bitterness toward all creation, when his natural instinct lay all the other way, may find here some reasons in his logic of gloom. For years he and his had been fighting various impending disasters. In the end he had torn his family apart and set out on a weary pilgrimage to pay, for long financial unwisdom, a heavy price—a penance in which all, without complaint, had joined. Now, just when it seemed about ended, when they were ready to unite and be happy once more, when he could hold up his head among his fellows—in this moment of supreme triumph had come the message that Susy's lovely and blameless life was ended. There are not many greater dramas in fiction or in history than this. The wonder is not that Mark Twain so often preached the doctrine of despair during his later life, but that he did not exemplify it—that he did not become a misanthrope in fact.

Mark Twain's life had contained other tragedies, but no other that equaled this one. This time none of the elements were lacking—not the smallest detail. The dead girl had been his heart's pride; it was a year since he had seen her face, and now by this word he knew that he would never see it again. The blow had found him alone—

absolutely alone among strangers—those others half-way across the ocean, drawing nearer and nearer to it, and he with no way to warn them, to prepare them, to comfort them.

Clemens sought no comfort for himself. Just as nearly forty years before he had writhed in self-accusation for the death of his younger brother, and as later he held himself to blame for the death of his infant son, so now he crucified himself as the slayer of Susy. To Mrs. Clemens he poured himself out in a letter in which he charged himself categorically as being wholly and solely responsible for the tragedy, detailing step by step with fearful reality his mistakes and weaknesses which had led to their downfall, the separation from Susy, and this final incredible disaster. Only a human being, he said, could have done these things.

Susy Clemens had died in the old Hartford home. She had been well for a time at Quarry Farm, well and happy, but during the summer of '96 she had become restless, nervous, and unlike herself in many ways. Her health seemed to be gradually failing, and she renewed the old interest in mental science, always with the approval of her parents. Clemens had great faith in mind over matter, and Mrs. Clemens also believed that Susy's high-strung nature was especially calculated to receive benefit from a serene and confident mental attitude. From Bombay, in January, she wrote Mrs. Crane:

> I am very glad indeed that Susy has taken up Mental Science, and I do hope it may do her as much good as she hopes. Last winter we were so very anxious to have her get hold of it, and even felt at one time that we must go to America on purpose to have her have the treatment, so it all seems very fortunate that it should have come about as it has this winter.

Just how much or how little Susy was helped by this treatment cannot be known. Like Stevenson, she had "a soul of flame in a body of gauze," a body to be guarded through the spirit. She worked continuously at her singing and undoubtedly overdid herself. Early in the year she went over to Hartford to pay some good-by visits, remaining most of the time in the home of Charles Dudley Warner, working hard at her singing. Her health did not improve, and when Katie Leary went to Hartford to arrange for their departure she was startled at the change in her.

"Miss Susy, you are sick," she said. "You must have the doctor come."

Susy refused at first, but she grew worse and the doctor was sent for. He thought her case not very serious—the result, he said, of overwork. He prescribed some soothing remedies, and advised that she be kept very quiet, away from company, and that she be taken to her own home, which was but a step away. It was then that the letter was written and the first cable sent to England. Mrs. Crane was summoned from Elmira, also Charles Langdon. Mr. Twichell was notified and came down from his summer place in the Adirondacks.

Susy did not improve. She became rapidly worse, and a few days later the doctor pronounced her ailment meningitis. This was on the 15th of August—that hot, terrible August of 1896. Susy's fever increased and she wandered through the burning rooms in delirium and pain; then her sight left her, an effect of the disease. She lay down at last, and once, when Katie Leary was near her, she put her hands on Katie's face and said, "mama." She did not speak after that, but sank into unconsciousness, and on the evening of Tuesday, August 18th, the flame went out forever.

To Twichell Clemens wrote of it:

> Ah, well, Susy died at *home*. She had that privilege. Her dying eyes rested upon no thing that was strange to them, but only upon things which they had known & loved always & which had made her young years glad; & she had you & Sue & Katie & & John & Ellen. This was happy fortune—I am thankful that it was vouchsafed to her. If she had died in another house—well, I think I could not have borne that. To us our house was

not unsentient matter—it had a heart & a soul & eyes to see us with, & approvals & solicitudes & deep sympathies; it was of us, & we were in its confidence, & lived in its grace & in the peace of its benediction. We never came home from an absence that its face did not light up & speak out its eloquent welcome—& we could not enter it unmoved. And could we now? oh, now, in spirit we should enter it unshod.

A tugboat with Dr. Rice, Mr. Twichell, and other friends of the family went down the bay to meet the arriving vessel with Mrs. Clemens and Clara on board. It was night when the ship arrived, and they did not show themselves until morning; then at first to Clara. There had been little need to formulate a message—their presence there was enough—and when a moment later Clara returned to the stateroom her mother looked into her face and she also knew. Susy already had been taken to Elmira, and at half past ten that night Mrs. Clemens and Clara arrived there by the through train—the same train and in the same coach which they had taken one year and one month before on their journey westward around the world.

> And again Susy was there, not waving her welcome in the glare of the lights as she had waved her farewell to us thirteen months before, but lying white and fair in her coffin in the house where she was born.

They buried her with the Langdon relatives and the little brother, and ordered a headstone with some lines which they had found in Australia:

Warm summer sun shine kindly here;
Warm southern wind blow softly here;
Green sod above lie light, lie light—
Good night, dear heart, good night, good night.[1]

[1] These lines at first were generally attributed to Clemens himself. When this was reported to him he ordered the name of the Australian poet, Robert Richardson, cut beneath them. The word "southern" in the original read "northern," as in Australia the warm wind is from the north. Richardson died in England in 1901.

CXCIV

WINTER IN TEDWORTH SQUARE

MRS. CLEMENS, Clara, and Jean, with Katie Leary, sailed for England without delay. Arriving there, they gave up the house in Guildford, and in a secluded corner of Chelsea, on the tiny and then almost unknown Tedworth Square (No. 23), they hid themselves away for the winter. They did not wish to be visited; they did not wish their whereabouts known except to a few of their closest friends. They wanted to be alone with their sorrow, and not a target for curious attention. Perhaps not a dozen people in London knew their address and the outside world was ignorant of it altogether. It was through this that a wild report started that Mark Twain's family had deserted him—that ill and in poverty he was laboring alone to pay his debts. This report—exploited in five-column head-lines by a hyper-hysterical paper of that period—received wide attention.

James Ross Clemens, of the St. Louis branch, a nephew of Frau von Versen, was in London just then, and wrote at once, through Chatto & Windus, begging Mark Twain to command his relative's purse. The reply to this kind offer was an invitation to tea, and "Young Doctor Jim," as he was called, found his famous relative by no means abandoned or in want, but in pleasant quarters, with his family still loyal. The general impression survived, however, that Mark Twain was sorely pressed, and the New York *Herald* headed a public benefit fund for the payment of his debts. The *Herald* subscribed one thousand dollars on its own account, and Andrew Carnegie followed with another thousand, but the enterprise was barely under way when Clemens wrote a characteristic letter, in which he declared that while he would have welcomed the help offered, being weary of debt, his family did not wish him to accept aid so long as he was able to take care of them through his own efforts.

Meantime he was back into literary harness; a note-book entry for October 24, 1896, says:

"Wrote the first chapter of the book to-day—*Around the World.*"

He worked at it uninterruptedly, for in work there was respite, though his note-books show something of his mental torture, also his spiritual heresies. His series of mistakes and misfortunes, ending with the death of Susy, had tended to solidify his attitude of criticism toward things in general and the human race in particular.

"Man is the only animal that blushes, or that needs to," was one of his maxims of this period, and in another place he sets down the myriad diseases which human flesh is heir to and his contempt for a creature subject to such afflictions and for a Providence that could invent them. Even Mrs. Clemens felt the general sorrow of the race. "Poor, poor human nature," she wrote once during that long, gloomy winter.

Many of Mark Twain's notes refer to Susy. In one he says:

"I did not hear her glorious voice at its supremest—that was in Hartford a month or two before the end."

Notes of heavy regret most of them are, and self-reproach and the hopelessness of it all. In one place he records her accomplishment of speech, adding:

"And I felt like saying 'you marvelous child,' but never said it; to my sorrow I remember it now. But I come of an undemonstrative race."

He wrote to Twichell:

But I have this consolation: that dull as I was I always knew enough to be proud when she commended me or my work—as proud as if Livy had done it herself—& I took it as the accolade from the hand of genius. I see now—as Livy always saw—that she had greatness in her, & that she herself was dimly conscious of it.

And now she is dead—& I can never tell her.

And closing a letter to Howells:

Good-by. Will healing ever come, or life have value again?

And shall we see Susy? Without doubt! without a *shadow* of doubt if it can furnish opportunity to break our hearts again.

On November 26th, Thanksgiving, occurs this note:

"We did not celebrate it. Seven years ago Susy gave her play for the first time."

And on Christmas:

London, 11.30 *Xmas morning.* The Square & adjacent streets are not merely quiet, they are dead. There is not a sound. At intervals a Sunday-looking person passes along. The family have been to breakfast. We three sat & talked as usual, but the name of the day was not mentioned. It was in our minds, but we said nothing.

And a little later:

Since bad luck struck us it is risky for people to have to do with us. Our cook's sweetheart was healthy. He is rushing for the grave now. Emily, one of the maids, has lost the sight of one eye and the other is in danger. Wallace carried up coal & blacked the boots two months—has suddenly gone to the hospital—pleurisy and a bad case. We began to allow ourselves to see a good deal of our friends, the Bigelows—straightway their baby sickened & died. Next Wilson got his skull fractured.

January 23, 1897. I wish the Lord would disguise Himself in citizen's clothing & make a personal examination of the sufferings of the poor in London. He would be moved & would do something for them Himself.

CXCV

"PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF JOAN OF ARC"

MEANTIME certain publishing events had occurred. During his long voyage a number of Mark Twain's articles had appeared in the magazines, among them "Mental Telegraphy Again," in *Harpers*, and in the *North American Review* that scorching reply to Paul Bourget's reflections upon America. Clemens could criticize his own nation freely enough, but he would hardly be patient under the strictures of a Frenchman, especially upon American women.

There had been book publication also during this period. The Harpers had issued an edition of *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, which included another Tom and Huck story—"Tom Sawyer, Detective," written in Paris, and the contents of the old *White Elephant* book.

But there had been a much more important book event. The chapters of his story of *Joan* having run their course in *Harper's Magazine* had been issued as a volume.

As already mentioned, *Joan* had been early recognized as Mark Twain's work, and it was now formally acknowledged as such on the title-page. It is not certain now that the anonymous beginning had been a good thing. Those who began reading it for its lofty charm, with the first hint of Mark Twain as the author became fearful of some joke or burlesque. Some who now promptly hastened to read it as Mark Twain's, were inclined to be disappointed at the very lack of these features. When the book itself appeared the general public, still doubtful as to its merits, gave it a somewhat dubious reception. The early sales were disappointing.

Nor were the reviewers enthusiastic, as a rule. Perhaps they did not read it over-carefully, or perhaps they were swayed a good deal by a sort of general verdict that, in attempting *Joan of Arc*, Mark Twain had gone out of his proper field. Furthermore, there were a number of *Joan* books published just then, mainly sober, somber books, in which Joan was pictured properly enough as a saint, and never as anything else—never being permitted to smile or enjoy the lighter side of life, to be a human being, in fact, at all.

But this is just the very wonder of Mark Twain's Joan. She is a saint; she is rare, she is exquisite, she is all that is lovely, and she is a human being besides. Considered from every point of view, *Joan of Arc* is Mark Twain's supreme literary expression, the loftiest, the most delicate, the most luminous example of his work. It is so from the first word of its beginning, that wonderful "Translator's Preface," to the last word of the last chapter, where he declares that the figure of Joan with the martyr's crown upon her head shall stand for patriotism through all time.

The idyllic picture of Joan's childhood with her playmates around the fairy tree is so rare in its delicacy and reality that any attempt to recall it here would disturb its bloom. The little poem, "L'Arbre fée de Bourlemont," Mark Twain's own composition, is a perfect note, and that curiously enough, for in versification he was not likely to be strong. Joan's girlhood, the picture of her father's humble cottage, the singing there by the wandering soldier of the great song of Roland which stirred her deepest soul with the love of France, Joan's heroism among her playmates, her wisdom, her spiritual ideals—are not these all reverently and nobly told, and with that touch of tenderness which only Mark Twain could give? And the story of her voices, and her march, and of her first appearance before the wavering king. And then the great coronation scene at Rheims, and the dramatic moment when Joan commands the march on Paris—the dragging of the hopeless trial, and that last, fearful day of execution, what can surpass these? Nor must we forget those charming, brighter moments where Joan is shown just as a human being, laughing until the tears run at the absurdities of the paladin or the simple home prattle of her aged father and uncle. Only here and there does one find a touch—and it is never more than that—of the forbidden thing, the burlesque note which was so likely to be Mark Twain's undoing.

It seems incredible to-day that any reader, whatever his preconceived notions of the writer might have been, could have followed these chapters without realizing their majesty, and that this tale of Joan was a book such as had not before been written. Let any one who read it then and doubted, go back and consider it now. A surprise will await him, and it will be worth while. He will know the true personality of Joan of Arc more truly than ever before, and he will love her as the author loved her, for "the most innocent, the most lovely, the most adorable child the ages have produced."

The tale is matchless in its workmanship. The quaint phrasing of the old Sieur de Conté is perfectly adapted to the subject-matter, and the lovely character of the old narrator himself is so perfectly maintained that we find ourselves all the time as in an atmosphere of consecration, and feel that somehow we are helping him to weave a garland to lay on Joan's tomb. Whatever the tale he tells, he is never more than a step away. We are within sound of his voice, we can touch his presence; we ride with him into battle; we laugh with him in the by-play and humors of warfare; we sit hushed at his side through the long, fearful days of the deadly trial, and when it is all ended it is to him that we turn to weep for Joan—with him only would we mingle our tears. It is all bathed in the atmosphere of romance, but it is the ultimate of realism, too; not hard, sordid, ugly realism, but noble, spiritual, divine realism, belonging to no particular class or school —a creation apart. Not all of Mark Twain's tales have been convincing, but there is no chapter of his *Joan* that we doubt. We believe it all happened—we know that it must have happened, for our faith in the Sieur de Conté never for an instant wavers.

Aside from the personality of the book—though, in truth, one never is aside from it—the tale is a marvel in its pageantry, its splendid panorama and succession of stirring and stately scenes. The fight before Orleans, the taking of the Tourelles and of Jargeau, all the movement of that splendid march to Rheims, there are few better battle-pictures than these. Howells, always interested mainly in the realism of to-day, in his review hints at staginess in the action and setting and even in Joan herself. But Howells himself did not accept his earlier judgment as final. Five years later he wrote:

"She is indeed realized to the modern sense as few figures of the past have been realized in fiction."

As for the action, suppose we consider a brief bit of Joan's warfare. It is from the attack on the Tourelles:

> Joan mounted her horse now with her staff about her, and when our people saw us coming they raised a great shout, and were at once eager for another assault on the boulevard. Joan rode straight to the foss where she had received her wound, and, standing there in the rain of bolts and arrows, she ordered the paladin to let her long standard blow free, and to note when its fringes should touch the fortress. Presently he said:
>
> "It touches."
>
> "Now, then," said Joan to the waiting battalions, "the place is yours—enter in! Bugles, sound the assault! Now, then—all together—go!"
>
> And go it was. You never saw anything like it. We swarmed up the ladders and over the battlements like a wave—and the

place was our property. Why, one might live a thousand years and never see so gorgeous a thing as that again. . . .

We were busy and never heard the five cannon-shots fired, but they were fired a moment after Joan had ordered the assault; and so, while we were hammering and being hammered in the smaller fortress, the reserve on the Orleans side poured across the bridge and attacked the Tourelles from that side. A fire-boat was brought down and moored under the drawbridge which connected the Tourelles with our boulevard; wherefore, when at last we drove our English ahead of us, and they tried to cross that drawbridge and join their friends in the Tourelles, the burning timbers gave way under them and emptied them in a mass into the river in their heavy armor—and a pitiful sight it was to see brave men die such a death as that.

"God pity them!" said Joan, and wept to see that sorrowful spectacle. She said those gentle words and wept those compassionate tears, although one of those perishing men had grossly insulted her with a coarse name three days before when she had sent him a message asking him to surrender. That was their leader, Sir William Glasdale, a most valorous knight. He was clothed all in steel; so he plunged under the water like a lance, and of course came up no more.

We soon patched a sort of bridge together and threw ourselves against the last stronghold of the English power that barred Orleans from friends and supplies. Before the sun was quite down Joan's forever memorable day's work was finished, her banner floated from the fortress of the Tourelles, her promise was fulfilled, she had raised the siege of Orleans!

England had resented the *Yankee*, but it welcomed *Joan*. Andrew Lang adored it, and some years later contemplated dedicating his own book, *The Maid of France*, to Mark Twain.[1]

Brander Matthews ranks *Huck Finn* before *Joan of Arc*, but that is understandable. His literary culture and research enable him, in some measure, to comprehend the production of *Joan;* whereas to him *Huck* is pure magic. *Huck* is not altogether magic to those who know the West—the character of that section and the Mississippi River, especially of an older time—it is rather inspiration resulting from these existing things. *Joan* is a truer literary magic—the reconstruction of a far-vanished life and time. To reincarnate, as in a living body of the present, that marvelous child whose life was all that was pure and exalted and holy, is veritable necromancy and something more. It is the apotheosis of history.

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[1] His letter proposing this dedication, received in 1909, appears to have been put aside and forgotten by Mr. Clemens, whose memory had not improved with failing health.

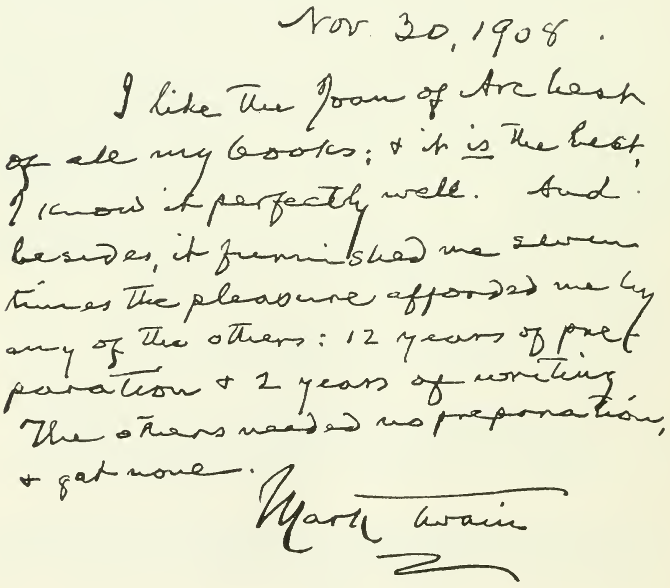
Throughout his life Joan of Arc had been Mark Twain's favorite character in the world's history. His love for her was a beautiful and a sacred thing. He adored young maidenhood always and nobility of character, and he was always the champion of the weak and the oppressed. The combination of these characteristics made him the ideal historian of an individuality and of a career like hers. It is fitting that in his old age (he was nearing sixty when it was finished) he should have written this marvelously beautiful thing. He could not have written it at an earlier time. It had taken him all these years to prepare for it; to become softened, to acquire the delicacy of expression, the refinement of feeling, necessary to the achievement.

It was the only book of all he had written that Mark Twain considered worthy of this dedication:

1870 TO MY WIFE 1895
OLIVIA LANGDON CLEMENS
THIS BOOK
is tendered on our wedding anniversary in grateful recognition of her twenty-five years of valued service as my literary adviser and editor.
THE AUTHOR

The Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc was a book not understood in the beginning, but to-day the public, that always renders justice in the end, has reversed its earlier verdict. The demand for *Joan* has multiplied many fold and it continues to multiply with every year. Its author lived long enough to see this change and to be comforted by it, for though the creative enthusiasm in his other books soon passed, his glory in the tale of Joan never died. On his seventy-third birthday, when all of his important books were far behind him, and he could judge them without prejudice, he wrote as his final verdict:

> *Nov. 30, 1908.*
>
> I like the *Joan of Arc* best of all my books; & it *is* the best; I know it perfectly well. And besides, it furnished me seven times the pleasure afforded me by any of the others: 12 years of preparation & 2 years of writing. The others needed no preparation, & got none. MARK TWAIN.



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Mark Twain

CXCVI

MR. ROGERS AND HELEN KELLER

IT was during the winter of '96, in London, that Clemens took an active interest in the education of Helen Keller and enlisted the most valuable adherent in that cause, that is to say, Henry H. Rogers. It was to Mrs. Rogers that he wrote, heading his letter:

For & in behalf
of Helen Keller,
Stone blind & deaf, &
formerly dumb.

DEAR MRS. ROGERS,—Experience has convinced me that when one wished to set a hard-worked man at something which he mightn't prefer to be bothered with it is best to move upon him behind his wife. If she can't convince him it isn't worth while for other people to try.

Mr. Rogers will remember our visit with that astonishing girl at Laurence Hutton's house when she was fourteen years old. Last July, in Boston, when she was 16 she underwent the Harvard examination for admission to Radcliffe College. She passed without a single condition. She was allowed only the same amount of time that is granted to other applicants, & this was shortened in her case by the fact that the question-papers had to be *read* to her. Yet she scored an average of 90, as against an average of 78 on the part of the other applicants.

It won't *do* for America to allow this marvelous child to retire from her studies because of poverty. If she can go on with them she will make a fame that will endure in history for centuries. Along her special lines she is the most extraordinary product of all the ages.

There is danger that she must retire from the struggle for a college degree for lack of support for herself & for Miss Sullivan (the teacher who has been with her from the start—Mr. Rogers will remember her). Mrs. Hutton writes to ask me to interest rich Englishmen in her case, & I would gladly try, but my secluded life will not permit it. I see *nobody*. Nobody knows my address. Nothing but the strictest hiding can enable me to write my book in time.

So I thought of this scheme: Beg you to lay siege to your husband & get him to interest himself and Messrs. John D. & William Rockefeller & the other Standard Oil chiefs in Helen's case; get them to subscribe an annual aggregate of six or seven hundred or a thousand dollars—& agree to continue this for three or four years, until she has completed her college course. I'm not trying to *limit* their generosity—indeed no; they may pile that Standard Oil Helen Keller College Fund as high as they please; they have *my* consent.

Mrs. Hutton's idea is to raise a permanent fund, the interest upon which shall support Helen & her teacher & put them out of the fear of want. I sha'n't say a word against it, but she will find it a difficult & disheartening job, & meanwhile what is to become of that miraculous girl?

No, for immediate and sound effectiveness, the thing is for you to plead with Mr. Rogers for this hampered wonder of your sex, & send him clothed with plenary powers to plead with the other chiefs—they have spent mountains of money upon the worthiest benevolences, & I think that the same spirit which moved them to put their hands down through their hearts into their pockets in those cases will answer "Here!" when its name is called in this one.

There—I don't need to apologize to you or to H. H. for this appeal that I am making; I know you too well for that.

Good-by, with love to all of you, S. L. CLEMENS.

The result of this letter was that Mr. Rogers personally took charge of Helen Keller's fortunes, and out of his own means made it possible for her to continue her education and to achieve for herself the enduring fame which Mark Twain had foreseen.

Mr. Rogers wrote that, by a curious coincidence, a letter had come to him from Mrs. Hutton on the same morning that Mrs. Rogers had received hers from Tedworth Square. Clemens sent grateful acknowledgments to Mrs. Rogers.

Dear Mrs. Rogers,—It is superb! And I am beyond measure grateful to you both. I knew you would be interested in that wonderful girl, & that Mr. Rogers was already interested in her & touched by her; & I was sure that if nobody else helped her you two *would;* but you have gone far & away beyond the sum I expected—may your lines fall in pleasant places here & Hereafter for it!

The Huttons are as glad & grateful as they can be, & I am glad for their sakes as well as for Helen's.

I want to thank Mr. Rogers for crucifying himself on the same old cross between Bliss & Harper; & goodness knows I hope he will come to enjoy it above all other dissipations yet, seeing that it has about it the elements of stability & permanency. However, at any time that he says *sign* we're going to do it.

Ever sincerely yours,
S. L. Clemens.

CXCVII

FINISHING THE BOOK OF TRAVEL

ONE reading the *Equator* book to-day, and knowing the circumstances under which it was written, might be puzzled to reconcile the secluded household and its atmosphere of sorrow with certain gaieties of the subject-matter. The author himself wondered at it, and to Howells wrote:

> I don't mean that I am miserable; no—worse than that—indifferent. Indifferent to nearly everything but work. I like that; I enjoy it, & stick to it. I do it without purpose & without ambition; merely for the love of it. Indeed, I am a mud-image; & it puzzles me to know what it is in me that writes & has comedy fancies & finds pleasure in phrasing them. It is the law of our nature, of course, or it wouldn't happen; the thing in me forgets the presence of the mud-image, goes its own way wholly unconscious of it & apparently of no kinship with it.

He saw little company. Now and then a good friend, J. Y. W. MacAlister, came in for a smoke with him. Once Clemens sent this line:

> You speak a language which I understand. I would like to see you. Could you come and smoke some manilas; I would, of course, say dine, but my family are hermits & cannot see any one, but I would have a fire in my study, & if you came at any time after your dinner that might be most convenient for you you would find me & a welcome.

Clemens occasionally went out to dinner, but very privately. He dined with Bram Stoker, who invited Anthony Hope and one or two others, and with the

Chattos and Mr. Percy Spalding; also with Andrew Lang, who wrote, "Your old friend, Lord Lorne, wants to see you again"; with the Henry M. Stanleys and Poultney Bigelow, and with Francis H. Skrine, a government official he had met in India. But in all such affairs he was protected from strangers and his address was kept a secret from the public. Finally, the new-found cousin, Dr. Jim Clemens, fell ill, and the newspapers had it presently that Mark Twain was lying at the point of death. A reporter ferreted him out and appeared at Tedworth Square with cabled instructions from his paper. He was a young man, and innocently enough exhibited his credentials. His orders read:

"If Mark Twain very ill, five hundred words. If dead, send one thousand."

Clemens smiled grimly as he handed back the cable.

"You don't need as much as that," he said. "Just say the report of my death has been grossly exaggerated."

The young man went away quite seriously, and it was not until he was nearly to his office that he saw the joke. Then, of course, it was flashed all over the world.

Clemens kept grinding steadily at the book, for it was to be a very large volume—larger than he had ever written before. To MacAlister, April 6, 1897, he wrote, replying to some invitation:

> Ah, but I mustn't stir from my desk before night now when the publisher is hurrying me & I am almost through. I am up at work now—4 o'clock in the morning—and a few more spurts will pull me through. You come down here & smoke; that is better than tempting a working-man to strike & go to tea.
>
> And it would move me too deeply to see Miss Corelli. When I saw her last it was on the street in Homburg, & Susy was walking with me.

On April 13th he makes a note-book entry: "I finished my book to-day," and on the 15th he wrote MacAlister, inclosing some bits of manuscript:

I finished my book yesterday, and the madam edited this stuff out of it—on the ground that the first part is not delicate & the last part is *in*delicate. Now, there's a nice distinction for you—& correctly stated, too, & perfectly true.

It may interest the reader to consider briefly the manner in which Mark Twain's "editor" dealt with his manuscript, and a few pages of this particular book remain as examples. That he was not always entirely tractable, or at least submissive, but that he did yield, and graciously, is clearly shown.

In one of her comments Mrs. Clemens wrote:

Page 597. I hate to say it, but it seems to me that you go too minutely into particulars in describing the feats of the aboriginals. I felt it in the boomerang-throwing.

And Clemens just below has written:

Boomerang has been furnished with a special train—that is, I've turned it into "Appendix." Will that answer?

Page 1002. I don't like the "shady-principled cat that has a family in every port."

Then I'll modify him just a little.

Page 1020. 9th line from the top. I think some other word would be better than "stench." You have used that pretty often.

But can't I get it in *any*where? You've knocked it out every time. Out it goes again. And yet "stench" is a noble, good word.

Page 1038. I hate to have your father pictured as lashing a slave boy.

It's out, and my father is whitewashed.

Page 1050. 2d line from the bottom. Change breech-clout. It's a word that you love and I abominate. I would take that and "offal" out of the language.

You are steadily weakening the English tongue, Livy.

Page 1095. Perhaps you don't care, but whoever told you that the Prince's green stones were rubies told an untruth. They

> were superb emeralds. Those strings of pearls and emeralds were famous all over Bombay.
>
> All right, I'll make them emeralds, but it loses force. Green rubies is a fresh thing. And besides it was one of the Prince's own staff liars that told me.

That the book was not quite done, even after the triumphant entry of April 13th, is shown by another note which followed something more than a month later:

> *May* 18, 1897. Finished the book again—addition of 30,000 words.

And to MacAlister he wrote:

> I have finished the book at last—and finished it for good this time. Now I am ready for dissipation with a good conscience. What night will you come down & smoke?

His book finished, Clemens went out rather more freely, and one evening allowed MacAlister to take him around to the Savage Club. There happened to be a majority of the club committee present, and on motion Mark Twain was elected an honorary life member. There were but three others on whom this distinction had been conferred—Stanley, Nansen, and the Prince of Wales. When they told Mark Twain this he said:

"Well, it must make the Prince feel mighty fine."[1]

He did not intend to rest; in another entry we find:

> *May* 23, 1897. Wrote first chapter of above story to-day.

The "above story" is a synopsis of a tale which he tried then and later in various forms—a tale based on a scientific idea that one may dream an episode covering a period of years in minute detail in what, by our reckoning, may be no more than a few brief seconds. In this particular form of the story a man sits down to write some memories and falls into a doze. The smell of his cigarette smoke causes him to dream of the burning of his home, the destruction of his family, and of a long period of years following. Awakening a few seconds later, and confronted by his wife and children, he refuses to believe in their reality, maintaining that this condition, and not the other, is the dream. Clemens tried the psychological literary experiment in as many as three different ways during the next two or three years, and each at considerable length; but he developed none of them to his satisfaction, or at least he brought none of them to conclusion. Perhaps the most weird of these attempts, and the most intensely interesting, so long as the verisimilitude is maintained, is a dream adventure in a drop of water which, through an incredible human reduction to microbic, even atomic, proportions, has become a vast tempestuous sea. Mark Twain had the imagination for these undertakings and the literary workmanship, lacking only a definite plan for development of his tale—a lack which had brought so many of his literary ventures to the rocks.

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[1] In a volume of Savage Club anecdotes the date of Mark Twain's election to honorary membership is given as 1899. Clemens's notebook gives it in 1897.

CXCVIII

A SUMMER IN SWITZERLAND

THE Queen's Jubilee came along—June 22, 1897, being the day chosen to celebrate the sixty-year reign. Clemens had been asked to write about it for the American papers, and he did so after his own ideas, illustrating some of his material with pictures of his own selection. The selections were made from various fashion-plates, which gave him a chance to pick the kind of a prince or princess or other royal figure that he thought fitted his description without any handicap upon his imagination. Under his portrait of Henry V. (a very correctly dressed person in top-hat and overcoat) he wrote:

> In the original the King has a crown on. That is no kind of a thing for the King to wear when he has come home on business. He ought to wear something he can collect taxes in. You will find this representation of Henry V. active, full of feeling, full of sublimity. I have pictured him looking out over the battle of Agincourt and studying up where to begin.

Mark Twain's account of the Jubilee probably satisfied most readers; but James Tufts, then managing editor of the San Francisco *Examiner*, had a rather matter-of-fact Englishman on the staff, who, after reading the report, said:

"Well, Jim Tufts, I hope you are satisfied with that Mark Twain cable."

"Why, yes," said Tufts; "aren't you?"

"I should say not. Just look what he says about the number of soldiers. He says, 'I never saw so many soldiers anywhere except on the stage of a theater.' Why, Tufts, don't you know that the soldiers in the theater are the same old soldiers marching around and around? There aren't more than a hundred soldiers in the biggest army ever put on the stage."

It was decided to vacate the house in Tedworth Square and go to Switzerland for the summer. Mrs. Crane and Charles Langdon's daughter, Julia, joined them early in July, and they set out for Switzerland a few days later. Just before leaving, Clemens received an offer from Pond of fifty thousand dollars for one hundred and twenty-five nights on the platform in America. It was too great a temptation to resist at once, and they took it under advisement. Clemens was willing to accept, but Mrs. Clemens opposed the plan. She thought his health no longer equal to steady travel. She believed that with continued economy they would be able to manage their problem without this sum. In the end the offer was declined.

They journeyed to Switzerland by way of Holland and Germany, the general destination being Lucerne. They did not remain there, however. They found a pretty little village farther up the lake—Weggis, at the foot of the Rigi—where, in the Villa Bühlegg, they arranged for the summer at very moderate rates indeed. Weggis is a beautiful spot, looking across the blue water to Mount Pilatus, the lake shore dotted with white villages. Down by the water, but a few yards from the cottage—for it was scarcely a villa except by courtesy—there was a little inclosure, and a bench under a large tree, a quiet spot where Clemens often sat to rest and smoke. The fact is remembered there to-day, and recorded. A small tablet has engraved upon it "Mark Twain Ruhe." Farther along the shore he discovered a neat, white cottage where some kindly working-people agreed to rent him an upper room for a study. It was a sunny room with windows looking out upon the lake, and he worked there steadily. To Twichell he wrote:

> This is the charmingest place we have ever lived in for repose and restfulness, superb scenery whose beauty undergoes a perpetual change from one miracle to another, yet never runs short of fresh surprises and new inventions. We shall always come here for the summers if we can.

The others have climbed the Rigi, he says, and he expects to some day if Twichell will come and climb it with him. They had climbed it together during that summer vagabondage, nineteen years before.

He was full of enthusiasm over his work. To F. H. Skrine, in London, he wrote that he had four or five books all going at once, and his note-book contains two or three pages merely of titles of the stories he proposed to write.

But of the books begun that summer at Weggis none appears to have been completed. There still exists a bulky, half-finished manuscript about Tom and Huck, most of which was doubtless written at this time, and there is the tale already mentioned, the "dream" story; and another tale with a plot of intricate psychology and crime; still another with the burning title of "Hell-Fire Hotchkiss"—a story of Hannibal life—and some short stories. Clemens appeared to be at this time out of tune with fiction. Perhaps his long book of travel had disqualified his invention. He realized that these various literary projects were leading nowhere, and one after another he dropped them. The fact that proofs of the big book were coming steadily may also have interfered with his creative faculty.

As was his habit, Clemens formed the acquaintance of a number of the native residents, and enjoyed talking to them about their business and daily affairs. They were usually proud and glad of these attentions, quick to see the humor of his remarks.

But there was an old watchmaker—an *Uhrmacher*—who remained indifferent. He would answer only in somber monosyllables, and he never smiled. Clemens at last brought the cheapest kind of a watch for repairs.

"Be very careful of this watch," he said. "It is a fine one."

The old man merely glared at him.

"It is not a valuable watch. It is a worthless watch."

"But I gave six francs for it in Paris."

"Still, it is a cheap watch," was the unsmiling answer. Defeat waits somewhere for every conqueror.

Which recalls another instance, though of a different sort. On one of his many voyages to America he was sitting on deck in a steamer-chair when two little girls stopped before him. One of them said, hesitatingly:

"Are you Mr. Mark Twain?"

"Why, yes, dear, they call me that."

"Won't you please say something funny?"

And for the life of him he couldn't make the required remark.

In one of his letters to Twichell of that summer, Clemens wrote of the arrival there of the colored jubilee singers, always favorites of his, and of his great delight in them.

> We went down to the village hotel & bought our tickets & entered the beer-hall, where a crowd of German & Swiss men & women sat grouped around tables with their beer-mugs in front of them—self-contained & unimpressionable-looking people—an indifferent & unposted & disheartening audience—& up at the far end of the room sat the jubilees in a row. The singers got up & stood—the talking & glass-jingling went on. Then rose & swelled out above those common earthly sounds one of those rich chords, the secret of whose make only the jubilees possess, & a spell fell upon that house. It was fine to see the faces light up with the pleased wonder & surprise of it. No one was indifferent any more; & when the singers finished the camp was theirs. It was a triumph. It reminded me of Lancelot riding

in Sir Kay's armor, astonishing complacent knights who thought they had struck a soft thing. The jubilees sang a lot of pieces. Arduous & painstaking cultivation has not diminished or artificialized their music, but on the contrary—to my surprise—has mightily reinforced its eloquence and beauty. Away back in the beginning—to my mind—their music made all other vocal music cheap; & that early notion is emphasized now. It is entirely beautiful to me; & it moves me infinitely more than any other music can. I think that in the jubilees & their songs America has produced the perfectest flower of the ages; & I wish it were a foreign product, so that she would worship it & lavish money on it & go properly crazy over it.

Now, these countries are different: *they* would do all that if it were *native*. It is true they praise God, but that is merely a formality, & nothing in it; they open out their whole hearts to *no* foreigner.

As the first anniversary of Susy's death drew near the tension became very great. A gloom settled on the household, a shadow of restraint. On the morning of the 18th Clemens went early to his study. Somewhat later Mrs. Clemens put on her hat and wrap, and taking a small bag left the house. The others saw her go toward the steamer-landing, but made no inquiries as to her destination. They guessed that she would take the little boat that touched at the various points along the lake shore. This she did, in fact, with no particular plan as to where she would leave it. One of the landing-places seemed quiet and inviting, and there she went ashore, and taking a quiet room at a small inn spent the day in reading Susy's letters. It was evening when she returned, and her husband, lonely and anxious, was waiting for her at the landing. He had put in the day writing the beautiful poem, "In Memoriam," a strain lofty, tender, and dirge-like—liquidly musical, though irregular in form.[1]

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[1] Now included in the Uniform Edition.

CXCIX

WINTER IN VIENNA

THEY remained two months in Weggis—until toward the end of September; thence to Vienna, by way of Innsbruck, in the Tyrol, "where the mountains seem more approachable than in Switzerland." Clara Clemens wished to study the piano under Leschetizky, and this would take them to Austria for the winter. Arriving at Vienna, they settled in the Hotel Metropole, on the banks of the Danube. Their rooms, a corner suite, looked out on a pretty green square, the Merzimplatz, and down on the Franz Josef quay. A little bridge crosses the river there, over which all kinds of life are continually passing. On pleasant days Clemens liked to stand on this bridge and watch the interesting phases of the Austrian capital. The Vienna humorist, Poetzl, quickly formed his acquaintance, and they sometimes stood there together. Once while Clemens was making some notes, Poetzl interested the various passers by asking each one—the errand-boy, the boot-black, the chestnut-vender, cabmen, and others—to guess who the stranger was and what he wanted. Most of them recognized him when their attention was called, for the newspapers had proudly heralded his arrival and his picture was widely circulated.

Clemens had scarcely arrived in Vienna, in fact, before he was pursued by photographers, journalists, and autograph-hunters. The Viennese were his fond admirers, and knowing how the world elsewhere had honored him they were determined not to be outdone. The *Neues Wiener Tageblatt*, a fortnight after his arrival, said:

> It is seldom that a foreign author has found such a hearty reception in Vienna as that accorded to Mark Twain, who not only has the reputation of being the foremost humorist in the whole civilized world, but one whose personality arouses everywhere a peculiar interest on account of the genuine American character which sways it.

He was the guest of honor at the Concordia Club soon after his arrival, and the great ones of Vienna assembled to do him honor. Charlemagne Tower, then American minister, was also one of the guests. Writers, diplomats, financiers, municipal officials, everybody in Vienna that was worth while, was there. Clemens gave them a surprise, for when Ferdinand Gross, Concordia president, introduced him first in English, then in German, Mark Twain made his reply wholly in the latter language.

The paper just quoted gives us a hint of the frolic and wassail of that old *Festkneipe* when it says:

> At 9 o'clock Mark Twain appeared in the salon, and amid a storm of applause took his seat at the head of the table. His characteristic shaggy and flowing mane of hair adorning a youthful countenance attracted the attention at once of all present. After a few formal convivial commonplaces the president of the Concordia, Mr. Ferdinand Gross, delivered an excellent address in English, which he wound up with a few German sentences. Then Mr. Tower was heard in praise of his august countryman. In the course of his remarks he said he could hardly find words enough to express his delight at the presence of the popular American. Then followed the greatest attraction of the evening, an impromptu speech by Mark Twain in the German language, which it is true he has not fully mastered, but which he nevertheless controls sufficiently well to make it difficult to detect any harsh foreign accent. He had entitled his speech, "Die Schrecken der Deutschen Sprache" (the terrors of the German language). At times he would interrupt himself in English and ask, with a stuttering smile, "How do you call this word in German" or "I only know that in mother-tongue." The *Festkneipe* lasted far into the morning hours.

It was not long after their arrival in Vienna that the friction among the unamalgamated Austrian states flamed into a general outbreak in the Austrian Reichsrath, or Imperial Parliament. We need not consider just what the trouble was. Any one wishing to know can learn from Mark Twain's article on the subject, for it is more clearly pictured there than elsewhere. It is enough to say here that the difficulty lay mainly between the Hungarian and German wings of the house; and in the midst of it Dr. Otto Lecher made his famous speech, which lasted twelve hours without a break, in order to hold the floor against the opposing forces. Clemens was in the gallery most of the time while that speech, with its riotous accompaniment, was in progress.[1] He was intensely interested. Nothing would appeal to him more than that, unless it should be some great astronomic or geologic change. He was also present somewhat later when a resolution was railroaded through which gave the chair the right to invoke the aid of the military, and he was there when the military arrived and took the insurgents in charge. It was a very great occasion, a "tremendous episode," he says.

> The memory of it will outlast all the others that exist to-day. In the whole history of free parliament the like of it had been seen but three times before. It takes imposing place among the world's unforgetable things. I think that in my lifetime I have not twice seen abiding history made before my eyes, but I know that I have seen it once.

Wild reports were sent to the American press; among them one that Mark Twain had been hustled out with the others, and that, having waved his handkerchief and shouted "Hoch die Deutschen!" he had been struck by an officer of the law. Of course nothing of the kind happened. The sergeant-at-arms, who came to the gallery where he sat, said to a friend who suggested that Clemens be allowed to remain:

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[1] "When that house is legislating you can't tell it from artillery practice." From Mark Twain's report, "Stirring Times in Austria," in *Literary Essays*.

"Oh, I know him very well. I recognize him by his pictures, and I should be very glad to let him stay, but I haven't any choice because of the strictness of the order."

Clemens, however, immediately ran across a London *Times* correspondent, who showed him the way into the first gallery, which it seems was not emptied, so he lost none of the exhibit.

Mark Twain's report of the Austrian troubles, published in *Harper's Magazine* the following March and now included with the *Literary Essays*, will keep that episode alive and important as literature when otherwise it would have been merely embalmed, and dimly remembered, as history.

It was during these exciting political times in Vienna that a representative of a New York paper wrote, asking for a Mark Twain interview. Clemens replied, giving him permission to call. When the reporter arrived Clemens was at work writing in bed, as was so much his habit. At the doorway the reporter paused, waiting for a summons to enter. The door was ajar and he heard Mrs. Clemens say:

"Youth, don't you think it will be a little embarrassing for him, your being in bed?"

And he heard Mark Twain's easy, gentle, deliberate voice reply:

"Why, Livy, if you think so, we might have the other bed made up for him."

Clemens became a privileged character in Vienna. Official rules were modified for his benefit. Everything was made easy for him. Once, on a certain grand occasion, when nobody was permitted to pass beyond a prescribed line, he was stopped by a guard, when the officer in charge suddenly rode up:

"Let him pass," he commanded. "Lieber Gott! Don't you see it's Herr Mark Twain?"

The Clemens apartments at the Metropole were like a court, where with those of social rank assembled the foremost authors, journalists, diplomats, painters, philosophers, scientists, of Europe, and therefore of the world. A sister of the Emperor of Germany lived at the Metropole that winter and was especially cordial. Mark Twain's daily movements were chronicled as if he had been some visiting potentate, and, as usual, invitations and various special permissions poured in. A Vienna paper announced:

> He has been fêted and dined from morn till eve. The homes of the aristocracy are thrown open to him, counts and princes delight to do him honor, and foreign audiences hang upon the words that fall from his lips, ready to burst out any instant into roars of laughter.

* * * * * *

Deaths never came singly in the Clemens family. It was on the 11th of December, 1897, something more than a year after the death of Susy, that Orion Clemens died, at the age of seventy-two. Orion had remained the same to the end, sensitively concerned as to all his brother's doings, his fortunes and misfortunes: soaring into the clouds when any good news came; indignant, eager to lend help and advice in the hour of defeat; loyal, upright, and generally beloved by those who knew and understood his gentle nature. He had not been ill, and, in fact, only a few days before he died had written a fine congratulatory letter on his brother's success in accumulating means for the payment of his debts, entering enthusiastically into some literary plans which Mark Twain then had in prospect, offering himself for caricature if needed.

> I would fit in as a fool character, believing, what the Tennessee mountaineers predicted, that I would grow up to be a great man and go to Congress. I did not think it worth the trouble to be a common great man like Andy Johnson. I wouldn't give a pinch of snuff, little as I needed it, to be anybody less than Napoleon. So when a farmer took my father's offer for some chickens under advisement till the next day I said to myself, "Would Napoleon Bonaparte have taken under advisement till the next day an offer to sell him some chickens?"

To his last day and hour Orion was the dreamer, always with a new plan. It was one morning early that he died. He had seated himself at a table with pencil and paper and was setting down the details of his latest project when death came to him, kindly enough, in the moment of new hope.

There came also, just then, news of the death of their old Hartford butler, George. It saddened them as if it had been a member of the household. Jean, especially, wept bitterly.

CC

MARK TWAIN PAYS HIS DEBTS

FOLLOWING THE EQUATOR[1] had come from the press in November and had been well received. It was a large, elaborate subscription volume, more elaborate than artistic in appearance. Clemens, wishing to make some acknowledgment to his benefactor, tactfully dedicated it to young Harry Rogers:

"With recognition of what he is, and an apprehension of what he may become unless he form himself a little more closely upon the model of the author."

Following the Equator was Mark Twain's last book of travel, and it did not greatly resemble its predecessors. It was graver than the *Innocents Abroad;* it was less inclined to cynicism and burlesque than the *Tramp.* It was the thoughtful, contemplative observation and philosophizing of the soul-weary, world-weary pilgrim who has by no means lost interest, but only his eager, first enthusiasm. It is a gentler book than the *Tramp Abroad,* and for the most part a pleasanter one. It is better history and more informing. Its humor, too, is of a worthier sort, less likely to be forced and overdone. The holy Hindoo pilgrim's "itinerary of salvation" is one of the richest of all Mark Twain's fancies, and is about the best thing in the book. The revised philosophies of Pudd'nhead Wilson, that begin each chapter, have many of them passed into our daily speech. That some of Mark Twain's admirers were disappointed with the new book is very likely, but there were others who could not praise it enough. James Whitcomb Riley wrote:

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[1] In England, *More Tramps Abroad.*

> DEAR MR. CLEMENS,—For a solid week—night sessions—I have been glorying in your last book—and if you've ever done anything better, stronger, or of wholesomer uplift I can't recall it. So here's my heart and here's my hand with all the augmented faith and applause of your proudest countryman! It's just a hail I'm sending you across the spaces—not to call you from your blessed work an instant, but simply to join my voice in the universal cheer that is steadfastly going up for you.
>
> As gratefully as delightedly,
>
> Your abiding friend,
>
> JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

Notwithstanding the belief that the sale of single subscription volumes had about ended, Bliss did well with the new book. Thirty or forty thousand copies were placed without much delay, and the accumulated royalties paid into Mr. Rogers's hands. The burden of debt had become a nightmare. Clemens wrote:

> Let us begin on those debts. I cannot bear the weight any longer. It totally unfits me for work.

This was November 10, 1897. December 29th he wrote:

> Land, we are glad to see those debts diminishing. For the first time in my life I am getting more pleasure from paying money out than pulling it in.

To Howells, January 3d, Clemens wrote that they had "turned the corner," and a month later:

> We've lived close to the bone and saved every cent we could, & there's no undisputed claim now that we can't cash. There are only two claims which I dispute & which I mean to look into personally before I pay them. But they are small. Both together they amount to only $12,500. I hope you will never get the like of the load saddled onto you that was saddled onto me

3 years ago. And yet there is such a solid pleasure in *paying* the things that I reckon maybe it is worth while to get into that kind of a hobble after all. Mrs. Clemens gets millions of delight out of it; & the children have never uttered one complaint about the scrimping from the beginning.

By the end of January, 1898, Mark Twain had accumulated enough money to make the final payment to his creditors and stand clear of debt. At the time of his failure he said he had given himself five years in which to clear himself of the heavy obligation. He had achieved that result in less than three. The world heralded it as a splendid triumph.

Miss Katharine I. Harrison, Henry Rogers's secretary, who had been in charge of the details, wrote in her letter announcing his freedom:

"I wish I could shout it across the water to you so that you would get it ten days ahead of this letter."

Miss Harrison's letter shows that something like thirteen thousand dollars would remain to his credit after the last accounts were wiped away.

Clemens had kept his financial progress from the press, but the payment of the final claims was distinctly a matter of news and the papers made the most of it. Head-lines shouted it, there were long editorials in which Mark Twain was heralded as a second Walter Scott, though it was hardly necessary that he should be compared with anybody; he had been in that—as in those peculiarities which had invited his disaster—just himself.

One might suppose now that he had had enough of inventions and commercial enterprises of every sort—that is, one who did not know Mark Twain might suppose this; but it would not be true. Within a month after the debts were paid he had negotiated with the great Austrian inventor, Szczepanik, and his business manager for the American rights of a wonderful carpet-pattern machine, obtained an option for these rights at fifteen hundred thousand dollars, and, Sellers-like, was planning to organize a company with a capital of fifteen hundred million dollars to control carpet-weaving industries of the world. He records in his note-book that a certain Mr. Wood, representing the American carpet interests, called upon him and, in the course of their conversation, asked him at what price he would sell his option.

> I declined, and got away from the subject. I was afraid he would offer me $500,000 for it. I should have been obliged to take it, but I was born with a speculative instinct & I did not want that temptation put in my way.

He wrote to Mr. Rogers about the great scheme, inviting the Standard Oil to furnish the capital for it—but it appears not to have borne the test of Mr. Rogers's scrutiny, and is heard of no more.

Szczepanik had invented the *Fernseher*, or Telelectroscope, the machine by which one sees at a distance. Clemens would have invested heavily in this, too, for he had implicit faith in its future, but the *Fernseher* was already controlled for the Paris Exposition; so he could only employ Szczepanik as literary material, which he did in two instances: "The Austrian Edison Keeping School Again" and "From the London *Times* of 1904"—magazine articles published in the *Century* later in the year. He was fond of Szczepanik and Szczepanik's backer, Mr. Kleinburg. In one of his note-book entries he says:

> Szczepanik is not a Paige. He is a gentleman; his backer, Mr. Kleinburg, is a gentleman, too, yet is not a Clemens—that is to say, he is not an ass.

Clemens did not always consult his financial adviser, Rogers, any more than he always consulted his spiritual adviser, Twichell, or his literary adviser, Howells, when he intended to commit heresies in their respective provinces. Somewhat later an opportunity came along to buy an interest in a preparation of skimmed milk, an invalid food by which the human race was going to be healed of most of its ills. When Clemens heard that Virchow had recommended this new restorative, the name of which was plasmon, he promptly provided MacAlister with five thousand pounds to invest in a company then organizing in London. It should be added that this particular investment was not an entire loss, for it paid very good dividends for several years. We shall hear of it again.

For the most part Clemens was content to let Henry Rogers do his financiering, and as the market was low with an upward incline, Rogers put the various accumulations into this thing and that, and presently had some fifty thousand dollars to Mark Twain's credit, a very comfortable balance for a man who had been twice that amount in debt only a few years before. It has been asserted most strenuously, by those in a position to know least about the matter, that Henry Rogers lent, and even gave, Mark Twain large sums, and pointed out opportunities whereby he could make heavily by speculation. No one of these statements is true. Mr. Rogers neither lent nor gave Mark Twain money for investment, and he never allowed him to speculate when he could prevent it. He invested for him wisely, but he never bought for him a share of stock that he did not have the money in hand to pay for in full—money belonging to and earned by Clemens himself. What he did give to Mark Twain was his priceless counsel and time—gifts more precious than any mere sum of money—boons that Mark Twain could accept without humiliation. He did accept them and was unceasingly grateful.[1]

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[1] Mark Twain never lost an opportunity for showing his gratitude to Henry Rogers. The reader is referred to Appendix T, at the end of the last volume, for a brief tribute which Clemens prepared in 1902. Mr. Rogers would not consent to its publication.

CCI

SOCIAL LIFE IN VIENNA

CLEMENS, no longer worried about finances and full of ideas and prospects, was writing now at a great rate, mingling with all sorts of social events, lecturing for charities, and always in the lime-light.

> I have abundant peace of mind again—no sense of burden. Work is become a pleasure—it is not labor any longer.

He was the lion of the Austrian capital, and it was natural that he should revel in his new freedom and in the universal tribute. Mrs. Clemens wrote that they were besieged with callers of every description:

> Such funny combinations are here sometimes: one duke, several counts, several writers, several barons, two princes, newspaper women, etc. I find so far, without exception, that the high-up aristocracy are simple and cordial and agreeable.

When Clemens appeared as a public entertainer all society turned out to hear him and introductions were sought by persons of the most exclusive rank. Once a royal introduction led to an adventure. He had been giving a charity reading in Vienna, and at the end of it was introduced, with Mrs. Clemens, to her Highness, Countess Bardi, a princess of the Portuguese royal house by marriage and sister to the Austrian Archduchess Maria Theresa. They realized that something was required after such an introduction; that, in fact, they must go within a day or two and pay their respects by writing their names in the visitors' book, kept in a sort of anteroom of the royal establishment. A few days later, about noon, they drove to the archducal palace, inquired their way to the royal anteroom, and informed the grandly uniformed *portier* that they wished to write their names in the visitors' book. The *portier* did not produce the book, but summoned a man in livery and gold lace and directed him to take them up-stairs, remarking that her Royal Highness was out, but would be in presently. They protested that her Royal Highness was not looking for them, that they were not calling, but had merely come to sign the visitors' book, but he said:

"You are Americans, are you not?"

"Yes, we are Americans."

"Then you are expected. Please go up-stairs."

Mrs. Clemens said:

"Oh no, we are not expected; there is some mistake. Please let us sign the book and we will go away."

But it was no use. He insisted that her Royal Highness would be back in a very little while; that she had commanded him to say so and that they must wait. They were shown up-stairs, Clemens going willingly enough, for he scented an adventure; but Mrs. Clemens was far from happy. They were taken to a splendid drawing-room, and at the doorway she made her last stand, refusing to enter. She declared that there was certainly some mistake, and begged them to let her sign her name in the book and go, without parleying. It was no use. Their conductor insisted that they remove their wraps and sit down, which they finally did—Mrs. Clemens miserable, her husband in a delightful state of anticipation. Writing of it to Twichell that night he said:

> I was hoping and praying that the Princess would come and catch us up there, & that those other Americans who were expected would arrive and be taken as impostors by the *portier* & be shot by the sentinels & then it would all go into the papers

& be cabled all over the world & make an immense stir and be perfectly lovely.

Livy was in a state of mind; she said it was too theatrically ridiculous & that I would never be able to keep my mouth shut; that I would be sure to let it out & it would get into the papers, & she tried to make me promise.

"Promise what?" I said.

"To be quiet about this."

"Indeed I won't; it's the best thing ever happened. I'll tell it and add to it & I wish Joe & Howells were here to make it perfect; I can't make all the rightful blunders by myself—it takes all three of us to do justice to an opportunity like this. I would just like to see Howells get down to his work & explain & lie & work his futile & inventionless subterfuges when that Princess comes raging in here & wanting to *know*."

But Livy could not hear fun—it was not a time to be trying to be funny. We were in a most miserable & shameful situation, & it—

Just then the door spread wide & our Princess & 4 more & 3 little Princes flowed in! Our Princess & her sister, the Archduchess Maria Theresa (mother to the imperial heir & to the 2 young girl Archduchesses present, & aunt to the 3 little Princes), & we shook hands all around & sat down & had a most sociable time for half an hour, & by & by it turned out that we were the right ones & had been sent for by a messenger who started too late to catch us at the hotel. We were invited for 2 o'clock, but we beat that arrangement by an hour & a half.

Wasn't it a rattling good comedy situation? Seems a kind of pity we were the right ones. It would have been such nuts to see the right ones come and get fired out, & we chatting along comfortably & nobody suspecting us for impostors.

Mrs. Clemens to Mrs. Crane:

Of course I know that I should have courtesied to her Imperial Majesty & not quite so deep to her Royal Highness, and that Mr. Clemens should have kissed their hands; but it was all so unexpected that I had no time to prepare, and if I had had I should not have been there; I only went in to help Mr. C. with my bad German. When our minister's wife is going to be presented to the Archduchess she practises her courtesying beforehand.

They had met royalty in simple American fashion and no disaster had followed.

We have already made mention of the distinguished visitors who gathered in the Clemens apartments at the Hotel Metropole. They were of many nations and ranks. It was the winter in London of twenty-five years before over again. Only Mark Twain was not the same. Then he had been unsophisticated, new, not always at his ease; now he was the polished familiar of courts and embassies—at home equally with poets and princes, authors and ambassadors and kings. Such famous ones were there as Vereshchagin, Leschetizky, Mark Hambourg, Dvorák, Lenbach, and Jókai, with diplomats of many nations. A list of foreign names may mean little to the American reader, but among them were Neigra, of Italy; Paraty, of Portugal; Lowenhaupt, of Sweden; and Ghiki, of Rumania. The Queen of Rumania, Carmen Sylva, a poetess in her own right, was a friend and warm admirer of Mark Twain. The Princess Metternich, and Madame de Laschowska, of Poland, were among those who came, and there were Nansen and his wife, and Campbell-Bannerman, who was afterward British Premier. Also there was Spiridon, the painter, who made portraits of Clara Clemens and her father, and other artists and potentates—the list is too long.

Those were brilliant, notable gatherings and are remembered in Vienna to-day. They were not always entirely harmonious, for politics was in the air and differences of opinion were likely to be pretty freely expressed.

Clemens and his family, as Americans, did not always have a happy time of it. It was the eve of the Spanish-American War and most of continental Europe sided with Spain. Austria, in particular, was friendly to its related nation; and from every side the Clemenses heard how America was about to take a brutal and unfair advantage of a weaker nation for the sole purpose of annexing Cuba.

Charles Langdon and his son Jervis happened to arrive in Vienna about this time, bringing straight from America the comforting assurance that the war was not one of conquest or annexation, but a righteous defense of the weak. Mrs. Clemens gave a dinner for them, at which, besides some American students, were Mark Hambourg, Gabrilowitsch, and the great Leschetizky himself. Leschetizky, an impetuous and eloquent talker, took this occasion to inform the American visitors that their country was only shamming, that Cuba would soon be an American dependency. No one not born to the language could argue with Leschetizky. Clemens once wrote of him:

> He is a most capable and felicitous talker—was born for an orator, I think. What life, energy, fire in a man past 70! & how he does play! He is easily the greatest pianist in the world. He is just as great & just as capable to-day as ever he was.
>
> Last Sunday night, at dinner with us, he did all the talking for 3 hours, and everybody was glad to let him. He told his experiences as a revolutionist 50 years ago in '48, & his battle-pictures were magnificently worded. Poetzl had never met him before. He is a talker himself & a good one—but he merely sat silent & gazed across the table at this inspired man, & drank in his words, & let his eyes fill & the blood come & go in his face & never said a word.

Whatever may have been his doubts in the beginning concerning the Cuban War, Mark Twain, by the end of May, had made up his mind as to its justice. When Theodore Stanton invited him to the Decoration Day banquet to be held in Paris, he replied:

> I thank you very much for your invitation and I would accept if I were foot-free. For I should value the privilege of helping you do honor to the men who rewelded our broken Union and consecrated their great work with their lives; and also I should like to be there to do homage to our soldiers and sailors of to-day who are enlisted for another most righteous war, and utter the hope that they may make short and decisive work of it and leave

Cuba free and fed when they face for home again. And finally I should like to be present and see you interweave those two flags which, more than any others, stand for freedom and progress in the earth—flags which represent two kindred nations, each great and strong by itself, competent sureties for the peace of the world when they stand together.

That is to say, the flags of England and America. To an Austrian friend he emphasized this thought:

The war has brought England and America close together—and to my mind that is the biggest dividend that any war in this world has ever paid. If this feeling is ever to grow cold again I do not wish to live to see it.

And to Twichell, whose son David had enlisted:

You are living your war-days over again in Dave & it must be strong pleasure mixed with a sauce of apprehension. . . .

I have never enjoyed a war, even in history, as I am enjoying this one, for this is the worthiest one that was ever fought, so far as my knowledge goes. It is a worthy thing to fight for one's own country. It is another sight finer to fight for another man's. And I think this is the first time it has been done.

But it was a sad day for him when he found that the United States really meant to annex the Philippines, and his indignation flamed up. He said:

"When the United States sent word to Spain that the Cuban atrocities must end she occupied the highest moral position ever taken by a nation since the Almighty made the earth. But when she snatched the Philippines she stained the flag."

CCII

LITERARY WORK IN VIENNA

ONE must wonder, with all the social demands upon him, how Clemens could find time to write as much as he did during those Vienna days. He piled up a great heap of manuscript of every sort. He wrote Twichell:

> There may be idle people in the world, but I am not one of them.

And to Howells:

> I couldn't get along without work now. I bury myself in it up to the ears. Long hours—8 & 9 on a stretch sometimes. It isn't all for print, by any means, for much of it fails to suit me; 50,000 words of it in the past year. It was because of the deadness which invaded me when Susy died.

He projected articles, stories, critiques, essays, novels, autobiography, even plays; he covered the whole literary round. Among these activities are some that represent Mark Twain's choicest work. "Concerning the Jews," which followed the publication of his "Stirring Times in Austria" (grew out of it, in fact), still remains the best presentation of the Jewish character and racial situation. Mark Twain was always an ardent admirer of the Jewish race, and its oppression naturally invited his sympathy. Once he wrote to Twichell:

> The difference between the brain of the average Christian and that of the average Jew—certainly in Europe—is about the difference between a tadpole's brain & an archbishop's. It is

> a marvelous race; by long odds the most marvelous race the world has produced, I suppose.

Yet he did not fail to see its faults and to set them down in his summary of Hebrew character. It was a reply to a letter written to him by a lawyer, and he replied as a lawyer might, compactly, logically, categorically, conclusively. The result pleased him. To Mr. Rogers he wrote:

> The Jew article is my "gem of the ocean." I have taken a world of pleasure in writing it & doctoring it & fussing at it. Neither Jew nor Christian will approve of it, but people who are neither Jews *nor* Christian will, for they are in a condition to know the truth when they see it.

Clemens was not given to race distinctions. In his article he says:

> I am quite sure that (bar one) I have no race prejudices, and I think I have no color prejudices nor caste prejudices nor creed prejudices. Indeed I know it. I can stand any society. All that I care to know is that a man is a human being, that is enough for me; he can't be any worse.

We gather from something that follows that the one race which he bars is the French, and this, just then, mainly because of the Dreyfus agitations.

He also states in this article:

> I have no special regard for Satan, but I can at least claim that I have no prejudice against him. It may even be that I lean a little his way on account of his not having a fair show.

Clemens indeed always had a friendly feeling toward Satan (at least, as he conceived him), and just at this time addressed a number of letters to him concerning affairs in general—cordial, sympathetic, informing letters enough, though apparently not suited for publication. A good deal of the work done at this period did not find its way into print. An interview with Satan; a dream-story concerning a platonic sweetheart, and some further comment on Austrian politics, are among the condemned manuscripts.

Mark Twain's interest in Satan would seem later to have extended to his relatives, for there are at least three bulky manuscripts in which he has attempted to set down some episodes in the life of one "Young Satan," a nephew, who appears to have visited among the planets and promoted some astonishing adventures in Austria several centuries ago. The idea of a mysterious, young, and beautiful stranger who would visit the earth and perform mighty wonders, was always one which Mark Twain loved to play with, and a nephew of Satan's seemed to him properly qualified to carry out his intention. His idea was that this celestial visitant was not wicked, but only indifferent to good and evil and suffering, having no personal knowledge of any of these things. Clemens tried the experiment in various ways, and portions of the manuscript are absorbingly interesting, lofty in conception, and rarely worked out—other portions being merely grotesque, in which the illusion of reality vanishes.

Among the published work of the Vienna period is an article about a morality play, the "Master of Palmyra," [1] by Adolf Wilbrandt, an impressive play presenting Death, the all-powerful, as the principal part.

The *Cosmopolitan Magazine* for August published "At the Appetite-Cure," in which Mark Twain, in the guise of humor, set forth a very sound and sensible idea concerning dietetics, and in October the same magazine published his first article on "Christian Science and the Book of Mrs. Eddy." As we have seen, Clemens had been always deeply interested in mental healing, and in closing this humorous skit he made due acknowledgments to the unseen forces which, properly employed, through the imagination work physical benefits:

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[1] About play-acting, *Forum*, October, 1898.

"Within the last quarter of a century," he says, "in America several sects of curers have appeared under various names and have done notable things in the way of healing ailments without the use of medicines."

Clemens was willing to admit that Mrs. Eddy and her book had benefited humanity, but he could not resist the fun-making which certain of her formulas and her phrasing invited. The delightful humor of the *Cosmopolitan* article awoke a general laugh, in which even devout Christian Scientists were inclined to join.[1] Nothing that he ever did exhibits more happily that peculiar literary gift upon which his fame rests.

But there is another story of this period that will live when most of those others mentioned are but little remembered. It is the story of "The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg." This is a tale that in its own way takes its place with the half-dozen great English short stories of the world—with such stories as "The Fall of the House of Usher," by Poe; "The Luck of Roaring Camp," by Harte; "The Man Who Would be King," by Kipling; and "The Man Without a Country," by Hale. As a study of the human soul, its flimsy pretensions and its pitiful frailties, it outranks all the rest. In it Mark Twain's pessimistic philosophy concerning the "human animal" found a free and moral vent. Whatever his contempt for a thing, he was always amused at it; and in this tale we can imagine him a gigantic Pantagruel dangling a ridiculous manikin, throwing himself back and roaring out his great bursting guffaws at its pitiful antics. The temptation and the downfall of a whole town was a colossal idea, a sardonic idea, and it is colossally and sardonically worked out.

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[1] It was so popular that John Brisben Walker voluntarily added a check for two hundred dollars to the eight hundred dollars already paid.

Human weakness and rotten moral force were never stripped so bare or so mercilessly jeered at in the marketplace. For once Mark Twain could hug himself with glee in derision of self-righteousness, knowing that the world would laugh with him, and that none would be so bold as to gainsay his mockery. Probably no one but Mark Twain ever conceived the idea of demoralizing a whole community—of making its "nineteen leading citizens" ridiculous by leading them into a cheap, glittering temptation, and having them yield and openly perjure themselves at the very moment when their boasted incorruptibility was to amaze the world. And it is all wonderfully done. The mechanism of the story is perfect, the drama of it is complete. The exposure of the nineteen citizens in the very sanctity of the church itself, and by the man they have discredited, completing the carefully prepared revenge of the injured stranger, is supreme in its artistic triumph. "The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg" is one of the mightiest sermons against self-righteousness ever preached. Its philosophy, that every man is strong until his price is named; the futility of the prayer not to be led into temptation, when it is only by resisting temptation that men grow strong—these things blaze out in a way that makes us fairly blink with the truth of them.

It is Mark Twain's greatest short story. It is fine that it should be that, as well as much more than that; for he was no longer essentially a story-teller. He had become more than ever a moralist and a sage. Having seen all of the world, and richly enjoyed and deeply suffered at its hands, he sat now as in a seat of judgment, regarding the passing show and recording his philosophies.

CCIII

AN IMPERIAL TRAGEDY

FOR the summer they went to Kaltenleutgeben, just out of Vienna, where they had the Villa Paulhof, and it was while they were there, September 10, 1898, that the Empress Elizabeth of Austria was assassinated at Geneva by an Italian vagabond, whose motive seemed to have been to gain notoriety. The news was brought to them one evening, just at supper-time, by Countess Wydenbouck-Esterhazy.

Clemens wrote to Twichell:

> That good & unoffending lady, the Empress, is killed by a madman, & I am living in the midst of world-history again. The Queen's Jubilee last year, the invasion of the Reichsrath by the police, & now this murder, which will still be talked of & described & painted a thousand years from now. To have a *personal friend* of the wearer of two crowns burst in at the gate in the deep dusk of the evening & say, in a voice broken with tears, "My God! the Empress is murdered," & fly toward her home before we can utter a question—why, it brings the giant event home to you, makes you a part of it & personally interested; it is as if your neighbor Antony should come flying & say, "Cæsar is butchered—the head of the world is fallen!"
>
> Of course there is no talk but of this. The mourning is universal and genuine, the consternation is stupefying. The Austrian Empire is being draped with black. Vienna will be a spectacle to see by next Saturday, when the funeral cortège marches.

Clemens and the others went into Vienna for the funeral ceremonies and witnessed them from the windows of the new Krantz Hotel, which faces the Capuchin church where the royal dead lie buried. It was a grandly impressive occasion, a pageant of uniforms of the allied nations that made up the Empire of Austria. Clemens wrote of it at considerable length, and sent the article to Mr. Rogers to offer to the magazines. Later, however, he recalled it—just why is not clear. In one place he wrote:

> Twice the Empress entered Vienna in state; the first time was in 1854, when she was a bride of seventeen, & when she rode in measureless pomp through a world of gay flags & decorations down the streets, walled on both hands with the press of shouting & welcoming subjects; & the second time was last Wednesday, when she entered the city in her coffin, & moved down the same streets in the dead of night under waving black flags, between human walls again, but everywhere was a deep stillness now & a stillness emphasized rather than broken by the muffled hoof-beats of the long cavalcade over pavements cushioned with sand, & the low sobbing of gray-headed women who had witnessed the first entrance, forty-four years before, when she & they were young & unaware. . . . She was so blameless—the Empress; & so beautiful in mind & heart, in person & spirit; & whether with the crown upon her head, or without it & nameless, a grace to the human race, almost a justification of its creation; would be, indeed, but that the animal that struck her down re-establishes the doubt.

They passed a quiet summer at Kaltenleutgeben. Clemens wrote some articles, did some translating of German plays, and worked on his "Gospel," an elaboration of his old essay on contenting one's soul through selfishness, later to be published as *What is Man?* A. C. Dunham and Rev. Dr. Parker, of Hartford, came to Vienna, and Clemens found them and brought them out to Kaltenleutgeben and read them chapters of his doctrines, which, he said, Mrs. Clemens would not let him print. Dr. Parker and Dunham returned to Hartford and reported Mark Twain more than ever a philosopher; also that he was the "center of notability and his house a court."

CCIV

THE SECOND WINTER IN VIENNA

THE Clemens family did not return to the Metropole for the winter, but went to the new Krantz, already mentioned, where they had a handsome and commodious suite looking down on the Neuer Markt and on the beautiful façade of the Capuchin church, with the great cathedral only a step away. There they passed another brilliant and busy winter. Never in Europe had they been more comfortably situated; attention had been never more lavishly paid to them. Their drawing-room was a salon which acquired the name of the "Second Embassy." Clemens in his note-book wrote:

> During 8 years now I have filled the position—with some credit, I trust, of self-appointed ambassador-at-large of the United States of America—without salary.

Which was a joke; but there was a large grain of truth in it, for Mark Twain, more than any other American in Europe, was regarded as typically representing his nation and received more lavish honors.

It had become the fashion to consult him on every question of public interest, for he was certain to say something worth printing, whether seriously or otherwise. When the Tsar of Russia proposed the disarmament of the nations William T. Stead, editor of the *Review of Reviews*, wrote for Mark Twain's opinion. He replied:

> DEAR MR. STEAD,—The Tsar is ready to disarm. I am ready to disarm. Collect the others; it should not be much of a task now.
>
> MARK TWAIN.

He was on a tide of prosperity once more, one that was to continue now until the end. He no longer had any serious financial qualms. He could afford to be independent. He refused ten thousand dollars for a tobacco indorsement, though he liked the tobacco well enough; and he was aware that even royalty was willing to put a value on its opinions. He declined ten thousand dollars a year for five years to lend his name as editor of a humorous periodical, though there was no reason to suppose that the paper would be otherwise than creditably conducted. He declined lecture propositions from Pond at the rate of about one a month. He could get along without these things, he said, and still preserve some remnants of self-respect. In a letter to Rogers he said:

> Pond offers me $10,000 for 10 nights, but I do not feel strongly tempted. Mrs. Clemens ditto.

Early in 1899 he wrote to Howells that Mrs. Clemens had proved to him that they owned a house and furniture in Hartford, that his English and American copyrights paid an income on the equivalent of two hundred thousand dollars, and that they had one hundred and seven thousand dollars' accumulation in the bank.

"I have been out and bought a box of 6c. cigars," he says; "I was smoking 4½c. before."

The things that men are most likely to desire had come to Mark Twain, and no man was better qualified to rejoice in them. That supreme, elusive thing which we call happiness might have been his now but for the tragedy of human bereavement and the torture of human ills. That he did rejoice—reveled indeed like a boy in his new fortunes, the honors paid him, and in all that gay Viennese life—there is no doubt. He could wave aside care and grief and remorse, forget their very existence, it seemed; but in the end he had only driven them ahead a little way and they waited by his path. Once, after reciting his occupations and successes, he wrote:

> All these things might move and interest one. But how desperately more I have been moved to-night by the thought of a little old copy in the nursery of *At the Back of the North Wind*. Oh, what happy days they were when that book was read, and how Susy loved it! . . . Death is so kind, benignant, to whom he loves, but he goes by us others & will not look our way.

And to Twichell a few days later:

> A Hartford with no Susy in it—& no Ned Bunce!—It is not the city of Hartford, it is the city of Heartbreak. . . . It seems only a few weeks since I saw Susy last—yet that was 1895 & this is 1899. . . .
>
> My work does not go well to-day. It failed yesterday—& the day before & the day before that. And so I have concluded to put the MS. in the waste-basket & meddle with some other subject. I was trying to write an article advocating the quadrupling of the salaries of our ministers & ambassadors, & the devising of an official dress for them to wear. It seems an easy theme, yet I couldn't do the thing to my satisfaction. All I got out of it was an article on Monaco & Monte Carlo—matters not connected with the subject at all. Still, that was something —it's better than a total loss.

He finished the article—"Diplomatic Pay and Clothes" —in which he shows how absurd it is for America to expect proper representation on the trifling salaries paid to her foreign ministers, as compared with those allowed by other nations.

He prepared also a reminiscent article—the old tale of the shipwrecked *Hornet* and the magazine article intended as his literary début a generation ago. Now and again he worked on some one of the several unfinished longer tales, but brought none of them to completion. The German drama interested him. Once he wrote to Mr. Rogers that he had translated "In Purgatory" and sent it to Charles Frohman, who pronounced it "all jabber and no play."

> Curious, too, for it tears these Austrians to pieces with laughter. When I read it, now, it seems entirely silly; but when I see it on the stage it is exceedingly funny.

He undertook a play for the Burg Theater, a collaboration with a Vienna journalist, Siegmund Schlesinger. Schlesinger had been successful with several dramas, and agreed with Clemens to do some plays dealing with American themes. One of them was to be called "Die Goldgraeberin," that is, "The Woman Gold-Miner." Another, "The Rival Candidates," was to present the humors of female suffrage. Schlesinger spoke very little English, and Clemens always had difficulty in comprehending rapid-fire German. So the work did not progress very well. By the time they had completed a few scenes of mining-drama the interest died, and they good-naturedly agreed that it would be necessary to wait until they understood each other's language more perfectly before they could go on with the project. Frau Kati Schratt, later morganatic wife of Emperor Franz Josef, but then leading comédienne of the Burg Theater, is said to have been cast for the leading part in the mining-play; and Director-General Herr Schlenther, head of the Burg Theater management, was deeply disappointed. He had never doubted that a play built by Schlesinger and Mark Twain, with Frau Schratt in the leading rôle, would have been a great success.

Clemens continued the subject of Christian Science that winter. He wrote a number of articles, mainly criticizing Mrs. Eddy and her financial methods, and for the first time conceived the notion of a book on the subject. The new hierarchy not only amused but impressed him. He realized that it was no ephemeral propaganda, that its appeal to human need was strong, and that its system of organization was masterful and complete. To Twichell he wrote:

> Somehow I continue to feel sure of that cult's colossal future. . . . I am selling my Lourdes stock already & buying Christian Science trust. I regard it as the Standard Oil of the future.

He laid the article away for the time and, as was his custom, put the play quite out of his mind and invented a postal-check which would be far more simple than post-office orders, because one could buy them in any quantity and denomination and keep them on hand for immediate use, making them individually payable merely by writing in the name of the payee. It seems a fine, simple scheme, one that might have been adopted by the government long ago; but the idea has been advanced in one form or another several times since then, and still remains at this writing unadopted. He wrote John Hay about it, remarking at the close that the government officials would probably not care to buy it as soon as they found they couldn't kill Christians with it.

He prepared a lengthy article on the subject, in dialogue form, making it all very clear and convincing, but for some reason none of the magazines would take it. Perhaps it seemed too easy, too simple, too obvious. Great ideas, once developed, are often like that.

CCV

SPEECHES THAT WERE NOT MADE

IN a volume of Mark Twain's collected speeches there is one entitled "German for the Hungarians—Address at the Jubilee Celebration of the Emancipation of the Hungarian Press, March 26, 1899." An introductory paragraph states that the ministers and members of Parliament were present, and that the subject was the "Ausgleich"—*i.e.*, the arrangement for the apportionment of the taxes between Hungary and Austria. The speech as there set down begins:

> Now that we are all here together I think that it will be a good idea to arrange the *Ausgleich.* If you will act for Hungary I shall be quite willing to act for Austria, and this is the very time for it.

It is an excellent speech, full of good-feeling and good-humor, but it was never delivered. It is only a speech that Mark Twain *intended* to deliver, and permitted to be copied by a representative of the press before he started for Budapest.

It was a grand dinner, brilliant and inspiring, and when Mark Twain was presented to that distinguished company he took a text from something the introducer had said and became so interested in it that his prepared speech wholly disappeared from his memory.

> I think I will never embarrass myself with a set speech again [he wrote Twichell]. My memory is old and rickety and cannot

stand the strain. But I had this luck. What I did was to furnish a text for a part of the splendid speech which was made by the greatest living orator of the European world—a speech which it was a great delight to listen to, although I did not understand any word of it, it being in Hungarian. I was glad I came, it was a great night, & I heard all the great men in the German tongue.

The family accompanied Clemens to Budapest, and while there met Franz, son of Louis Kossuth, and dined with him.

I assure you [wrote Mrs. Clemens] that I felt stirred, and I kept saying to myself "This is Louis Kossuth's son." He came to our room one day, and we had quite a long and a very pleasant talk together. He is a man one likes immensely. He has a quiet dignity about him that is very winning. He seems to be a man highly esteemed in Hungary. If I am not mistaken, the last time I saw the old picture of his father it was hanging in a room that we turned into a music-room for Susy at the farm.

They were most handsomely treated in Budapest. A large delegation greeted them on arrival, and a carriage and attendants were placed continually at their disposal. They remained several days, and Clemens showed his appreciation by giving a reading for charity.

It was hinted to Mark Twain that spring, that before leaving Vienna it would be proper for him to pay his respects to Emperor Franz Josef, who had expressed a wish to meet him. Clemens promptly complied with the formalities and the meeting was arranged. He had a warm admiration for the Austrian Emperor, and naturally prepared himself a little for what he wanted to say to him. He claimed afterward that he had compacted a sort of speech into a single German sentence of eighteen words. He did not make use of it, however. When he arrived at the royal palace and was presented, the Emperor himself began in such an entirely informal way that it did no occur to his visitor to deliver his prepared German sentence. When he returned from the audience he said:

"We got along very well. I proposed to him a plan to exterminate the human race by withdrawing the oxygen from the air for a period of two minutes. I said Szczepanik would invent it for him. I think it impressed him. After a while, in the course of our talk I remembered and told the Emperor I had prepared and memorized a very good speech but had forgotten it. He was very agreeable about it. He said a speech wasn't necessary. He seemed to be a most kind-hearted emperor, with a great deal of plain, good, attractive human nature about him. Necessarily he must have or he couldn't have unbent to me as he did. I couldn't unbend if I were an emperor. I should feel the stiffness of the position. Franz Josef doesn't feel it. He is just a natural man, although an emperor. I was greatly impressed by him, and I liked him exceedingly. His face is always the face of a pleasant man and he has a fine sense of humor. It is the Emperor's personality and the confidence all ranks have in him that preserve the real political serenity in what has an outside appearance of being the opposite. He is a man as well as an emperor—an emperor and a man."

Clemens and Howells were corresponding with something of the old-time frequency. The work that Mark Twain was doing—thoughtful work with serious intent—appealed strongly to Howells. He wrote:

> You are the greatest man of your sort that ever lived, and there is no use saying anything else. . . . You have pervaded your century almost more than any other man of letters, if not more; and it is astonishing how you keep spreading. . . . You are my "shadow of a great rock in a weary land" more than any other writer.

Clemens, who was reading Howells's serial, "Their Silver-Wedding Journey," then running in *Harper's Magazine*, responded:

> You are old enough to be a weary man with paling interests, but you do not show it; you do your work in the same old, delicate & delicious & forceful & searching & perfect way. I don't know how you can—but I suspect. I suspect that to you there is still dignity in human life, & that man is not a joke—a poor joke—the poorest that was ever contrived. Since I wrote my Bible[1] (last year), which Mrs. Clemens loathes & shudders over & will not listen to the last half nor allow me to print any part of it, man is not to me the respect-worthy person he was before, & so I have lost my pride in him & can't write gaily nor praisefully about him any more. . . .
>
> *Next morning.* I have been reading the morning paper. I do it every morning—well knowing that I shall find in it the usual depravities & basenesses & hypocrisies and cruelties that make up civilization & cause me to put in the rest of the day pleading for the damnation of the human race. I cannot seem to get my prayers answered, yet I do not despair.

He was not greatly changed. Perhaps he had fewer illusions and less iridescent ones, and certainly he had more sorrow; but the letters to Howells do not vary greatly from those written twenty-five years before. There is even in them a touch of the old pretense as to Mrs. Clemens's violence.

> I mustn't stop to play now or I shall never get those helfiard letters answered. (That is not my spelling. It is Mrs. Clemens's. I have told her the right way a thousand times, but it does no good, she never remembers.)

All through this Vienna period (as during several years before and after) Henry Rogers was in full charge of Mark Twain's American affairs. Clemens wrote him almost daily, and upon every matter, small or large, that developed, or seemed likely to develop, in his undertakings. The complications growing out of the type machine and Webster failures were endless.[1] The disposal of the manuscripts alone was work for a literary agent. The consideration of proposed literary, dramatic, and financial schemes must have required not only thought, but time. Yet Mr. Rogers comfortably and genially took care of all these things and his own tremendous affairs besides, and apologized sometimes when he felt, perhaps, that he had wavered a little in his attention. Clemens once wrote him:

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[1] The "Gospel," *What is Man?*

> Oh, dear me, you don't have to excuse yourself for neglecting me; you are entitled to the highest praise for being so limitlessly patient and good in bothering with my confused affairs, and pulling me out of a hole every little while.
>
> It makes me lazy, the way that Steel stock is rising. If I were lazier—like Rice—nothing could keep me from retiring. But I work right along, like a poor person. I shall figure up the rise, as the figures come in, and push up my literary prices accordingly, till I get my literature up to where nobody can afford it but the family. (N. B.—Look here, are you charging storage? I am not going to stand that, you know.) Meantime, I note those encouraging illogical words of yours about my not worrying because I am to be rich when I am 68; why didn't you have Cheiro make it 90, so that I could have *plenty* of room?
>
> It would be jolly good if some one should succeed in making a play out of "Is He Dead?"[2] From what I gather from dramatists, he will have his hands something more than full—but let him struggle, let him struggle.

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[1] "I hope to goodness I sha'n't get you into any more jobs such as the type-setter and Webster business and the Bliss-Harper campaigns have been. Oh, they were sickeners." [Clemens to Rogers, November 12, 1898.]

[2] Clemens himself had attempted to make a play out of his story "Is He Dead?" and had forwarded the MS. to Rogers. Later he wrote:

"Put 'Is He Dead?' in the fire. God will bless you. I too. I started to convince myself that I could write a play, or couldn't. I'm convinced. Nothing can disturb that conviction."

Is there some way, honest or otherwise, by which you can get a copy of Mayo's play, "Pudd'nhead Wilson," for me? There is a capable young Austrian here who saw it in New York and wants to translate it and see if he can stage it here. *I* don't think these people here would understand it or take to it, but he thinks it will pay us to try.

A couple of London dramatists want to bargain with me for the right to make a high comedy out of the "Million-Pound Note." Barkis is willing.

This is but one of the briefer letters. Most of them were much longer and of more elaborate requirements. Also they overflowed with the gaiety of good-fortune and with gratitude. From Vienna in 1899 Clemens wrote:

Why, it is just splendid! I have nothing to do but sit around and watch you set the hen and hatch out those big broods and make my living for me. Don't you wish you had somebody to do the same for you?—a magician who can turn steel and copper and Brooklyn gas into gold. I mean to raise your wages again—I begin to feel that I can afford it.

I think the hen ought to have a name; she must be called *Unberufen.* That is a German word which is equivalent to "*'sh! hush!* don't let the spirits hear you!" The superstition is that if you happen to let fall any grateful jubilation over good luck that you've had or are hoping to have you must shut square off and say "Unberufen!" and *knock wood.* The word drives the evil spirits away; otherwise they would divine your joy or your hopes and go to work and spoil your game. Set her again—do!

Oh, look here! You are just like everybody; merely because I am literary you think I'm a commercial somnambulist, and am not watching you with all that money in your hands. Bless you, I've got a description of you and a photograph in every police-office in Christendom, with the remark appended: "Look out for a handsome, tall, slender young man with a gray mustache and courtly manners and an address well calculated to deceive, calling himself by the name of Smith." Don't you try to get away—it won't work.

From the note-book:

Midnight. At Miss Bailie's home for English governesses. Two comedies & some songs and ballads. Was asked to speak & did it. (And rung in the "Mexican Plug.")

A Voice. "The Princess Hohenlohe wishes you to write on her fan."

"With pleasure—where is she?"

"At your elbow."

I turned & took the fan & said, "Your Highness's place is in a fairy tale; & by & by I mean to write that tale," whereat she laughed a happy girlish laugh, & we moved through the crowd to get to a writing-table—& to get in a strong light so that I could see her better. Beautiful little creature, with the dearest friendly ways & sincerities & simplicities & sweetnesses—the ideal princess of the fairy tales. She is 16 or 17, I judge.

Mental Telegraphy. Mrs. Clemens was pouring out the coffee this morning; I unfolded the *Neue Freie Presse*, began to read a paragraph & said:

"They've found a new way to tell genuine gems from false—"

"By the Röntgen ray!" she exclaimed.

That is what I was going to say. She had not seen the paper, & there had been no talk about the ray or gems by herself or by me. It was a plain case of telegraphy.

No man that ever lived has ever done a thing to please God—primarily. It was done to please himself, *then* God next.

The Being who to me is the real God is the one who created this majestic universe & rules it. He is the only originator, the only originator of thoughts; thoughts suggested from within, not from without; the originator of colors & of all their possible combinations; of forces & the laws that govern them; of forms & shapes of *all* forms—man has never invented a new one. He is the only originator. He made the materials of all things; He made the laws by which, & by which only, man may combine them into the machines & other things which outside influences suggest to him. He made character—man can portray it but not "create" it, for He is the only creator.

He is the perfect artisan, the perfect artist.

CCVI

A SUMMER IN SWEDEN

APART of the tragedy of their trip around the world had been the development in Jean Clemens of a malady which time had identified as epilepsy. The loss of one daughter and the invalidism of another was the burden which this household had now to bear. Of course they did not for a moment despair of a cure for the beautiful girl who had been so cruelly stricken, and they employed any agent that promised relief.

They decided now to go to London, in the hope of obtaining beneficial treatment. They left Vienna at the end of May, followed to the station by a great crowd, who loaded their compartment with flowers and lingered on the platform waving and cheering, some of them in tears, while the train pulled away. Leschetizky himself was among them, and Wilbrandt, the author of the *Master of Palmyra*, and many artists and other notables, "most of whom," writes Mrs. Clemens, "we shall probably never see again in this world."

Their Vienna sojourn had been one of the most brilliant periods of their life, as well as one of the saddest. The memory of Susy had been never absent, and the failing health of Jean was a gathering cloud.

They stopped a day or two at Prague, where they were invited by the Prince of Thurn and Taxis to visit his castle. It gave them a glimpse of the country life of the Bohemian nobility which was most interesting. The Prince's children were entirely familiar with *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*, which they had read both in English and in the translation.

They journeyed to London by way of Cologne, arriving by the end of May. Poultney Bigelow was there, and had recently been treated with great benefit by osteopathy (then known as the Swedish movements), as practised by Heinrick Kellgren at Sanna, Sweden. Clemens was all interest concerning Kellgren's method and eager to try it for his daughter's malady. He believed she could be benefited, and they made preparation to spend some months at least in Sanna. They remained several weeks in London, where they were welcomed with hospitality extraordinary. They had hardly arrived when they were invited by Lord Salisbury to Hatfield House, and by James Bryce to Portland Place, and by Canon Wilberforce to Dean's Yard. A rather amusing incident happened at one of the luncheon-parties. Canon Wilberforce was there and left rather early. When Clemens was ready to go there was just one hat remaining. It was not his, and he suspected, by the initials on the inside, that it belonged to Canon Wilberforce. However, it fitted him exactly and he wore it away. That evening he wrote:

PRINCE OF WALES HOTEL, DE VERE GARDENS,
July 3, 1899.

DEAR CANON WILBERFORCE,—It is 8 P.M. During the past four hours I have not been able to take anything that did not belong to me; during all that time I have not been able to stretch a fact beyond the frontiers of truth try as I might, & meantime, not only my morals have moved the astonishment of all who have come in contact with me, but my manners have gained more compliments than they have been accustomed to. This mystery is causing my family much alarm. It is difficult to account for it. I find I haven't my own hat. Have you developed any novelties of conduct since you left Mr. Murray's, & have they been of a character to move the concern of your friends? I think it must be this that has put me under this happy charm; but, oh dear! I tremble for the other man!

Sincerely yours,
S. L. CLEMENS.

Scarcely was this note on its way to Wilberforce when the following one arrived, having crossed it in transit:

July 3, 1899.

Dear Mr. Clemens,—I have been conscious of a vivacity and facility of expression this afternoon beyond the normal and I have just discovered the reason!! I have seen the historic signature "Mark Twain" in my hat!! Doubtless you have been suffering from a corresponding dullness & have wondered why. I departed precipitately, the hat stood on my umbrella and was a new Lincoln & Bennett—it fitted me exactly and I did not discover the mistake till I got in this afternoon. Please forgive me. If you should be passing this way to-morrow will you look in and change hats? or shall I send it to the hotel?

I am, very sincerely yrs.,
20 Dean's Yard. Basil Wilberforce.

Clemens was demanded by all the bohemian clubs, the White Friars, the Vagabonds, the Savage, the Beefsteak, and the Authors. He spoke to them, and those "Mark Twain Evenings" have become historic occasions in each of the several institutions that gave him welcome. At the Vagabonds he told them the watermelon story, and at the White Friars he reviewed the old days when he had been elected to that society; "days," he said, "when all Londoners were talking about nothing else than that they had discovered Livingstone, and that the lost Sir Roger Tichborne had been found and they were trying him for it."

At the Savage Club, too, he recalled old times and old friends, and particularly that first London visit, his days in the club twenty-seven years before.

"I was 6 feet 4 in those days," he said. "Now I am 5 feet 8½ and daily diminishing in altitude, and the shrinkage of my principles goes on. . . . Irving was here then, is here now. Stanley is here, and Joe Hatton, but Charles Reade is gone and Tom Hood and Harry Lee and Canon Kingsley. In those days you could have carried Kipling around in a lunch-basket; now he fills the world. I was young and foolish then; now I am old and foolisher."

At the Authors Club he paid a special tribute to Rudyard Kipling, whose dangerous illness in New York City and whose daughter's death had aroused the anxiety and sympathy of the entire American nation. It had done much to bring England and America closer together, Clemens said. Then he added that he had been engaged the past eight days compiling a pun and had brought it there to lay at their feet, not to ask for their indulgence, but for their applause. It was this:

"Since England and America have been joined in Kipling, may they not be severed in Twain."

Hundreds of puns had been made on his pen-name, but this was probably his first and only attempt, and it still remains the best.

They arrived in Sweden early in July and remained until October. Jean was certainly benefited by the Kellgren treatment, and they had for a time the greatest hopes of her complete recovery. Clemens became enthusiastic over osteopathy, and wrote eloquently to every one, urging each to try the great new curative which was certain to restore universal health. He wrote long articles on Kellgren and his science, largely justified, no doubt, for certainly miraculous benefits were recorded; though Clemens was not likely to underestimate a thing which appealed to both his imagination and his reason. Writing to Twichell he concluded, with his customary optimism over any new benefit:

> Ten years hence no sane man will call a doctor except when the knife must be used—& such cases will be rare. The educated physician will himself be an osteopath. Dave will become one after he has finished his medical training. Young Harmony ought to become one *now*. I do not believe there is any difference between Kellgren's science and osteopathy; but I am sending to America to find out. I want osteopathy to prosper; it is com-

mon sense & scientific, & cures a wider range of ailments than the doctor's methods can reach.

Twichell was traveling in Europe that summer, and wrote from Switzerland:

I seemed ever and anon to see you and me swinging along those glorious Alpine woods, staring at the new unfoldings of splendor that every turn brought into view—talking, talking, endlessly talking the days through—days forever memorable to me. That was twenty-one years ago; think of it! We were youngsters then, Mark, and how keen our relish of everything was! Well, I can enjoy myself now; but not with that zest and rapture. Oh, a lot of items of our tramp travel in 1878 that I had long forgotten came back to me as we sped through that enchanted region, and if I wasn't on duty with Venice I'd stop and set down some of them, but Venice must be attended to. For one thing, there is Howells's book to be read at such intervals as can be snatched from the quick-time march on which our rustling leader keeps us. However, in Venice so far we want to be gazing pretty steadily from morning till night, and by the grace of the gondola we can do it without exhaustion. Really I am drunk with Venice.

But Clemens was full of Sweden. The skies there and the sunsets he thought surpassed any he had ever known. On an evening in September he wrote:

Dear Joe,—I've no business in here—I ought to be outside. I shall never see another sunset to begin with it this side of heaven. Venice? land, what a poor interest that is! This is the place to be. I have seen about 60 sunsets here; & a good 40 of them were away & beyond anything I had ever imagined before for dainty & exquisite & marvelous beauty & infinite change & variety. America? Italy? the tropics? They have no notion of what a sunset ought to be. And this one—this unspeakable wonder! It discounts all the rest. It brings the tears, it is so unutterably beautiful.

Clemens read a book during his stay in Sweden which interested him deeply. It was the *Open Question*, by

Elizabeth Robbins—a fine study of life's sterner aspects. When he had finished he was moved to write the author this encouraging word:

> DEAR MISS ROBBINS,—A relative of Matthew Arnold lent us your *Open Question* the other day, and Mrs. Clemens and I are in your debt. I am not able to put in words my feeling about the book—my admiration of its depth and truth and wisdom and courage, and the fine and great literary art and grace of the setting. At your age you cannot have lived the half of the things that are in the book, nor personally penetrated to the deeps it deals in, nor covered its wide horizons with your very own vision—and so, what is your secret? how have you written this miracle? Perhaps one must concede that genius has no youth, but starts with the ripeness of age and old experience.
>
> Well, in any case, I am grateful to you. I have not been so enriched by a book for many years, nor so enchanted by one. I seem to be using strong language; still, I have weighed it.
>
> Sincerely yours,
> S. L. CLEMENS.

CCVII

30, WELLINGTON COURT

CLEMENS himself took the Kellgren treatment and received a good deal of benefit.

"I have come back in sound condition and braced for work," he wrote MacAlister, upon his return to London. "A long, steady, faithful siege of it, and I begin *now* in five minutes."

They had settled in a small apartment at 30, Wellington Court, Albert Gate, where they could be near the London branch of the Kellgren institution, and he had a workroom with Chatto & Windus, his publishers. His work, however, was mainly writing speeches, for he was entertained constantly, and it seemed impossible for him to escape. His note-book became a mere jumble of engagements. He did write an article or a story now and then, one of which, "My First Lie, and How I Got Out of It," was made the important Christmas feature of the New York Sunday *World*.[1]

Another article of this time was the "St. Joan of Arc," which several years later appeared in *Harper's Magazine*. This article was originally written as the Introduction of the English translation of the official record of the trials and rehabilitation of Joan, then about to be elaborately issued. Clemens was greatly pleased at being invited to prepare the Introduction of this important volume, but a smug person with pedagogic proclivities was in charge of the copy and proceeded to edit Mark Twain's manuscript, to alter its phrasing to conform to his own ideas of the Queen's English. Then he had it all nicely typewritten, and returned it to show how much he had improved it, and to receive thanks and compliments. He did not receive any thanks. Clemens recorded a few of the remarks that he made when he saw his edited manuscript:

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[1] Now included in the *Hadleyburg* volume, "Complete Works."

> I will not deny that my feelings rose to 104 in the shade. "The idea! That this long-eared animal—this literary kangaroo—this illiterate hostler with his skull full of axle-grease—this . . ." But I stopped there, for this was not the Christian spirit.

His would-be editor received a prompt order to return the manuscript, after which Clemens wrote a letter, some of which will go very well here.

> Dear Mr. X.,—I have examined the first page of my amended Introduction, & will begin now & jot down some notes upon your corrections. If I find any changes which shall not seem to me to be improvements I will point out my reasons for thinking so. In this way I may chance to be helpful to you, & thus profit you perhaps as much as you have desired to profit me.
>
> First Paragraph. "Jeanne d'Arc." This is rather cheaply pedantic, & is not in very good taste. Joan is not known by that name among plain people of our race & tongue. I notice that the name of the Deity occurs several times in the brief instalment of the Trials which you have favored me with. To be consistent, it will be necessary that you strike out "God" & put in "Dieu." Do not neglect this.
>
> Second Paragraph. Now you have begun on my punctuation. Don't you realize that you ought not to intrude your help in a delicate art like that with your limitations? And do you think that you have added just the right smear of polish to the closing clause of the sentence?
>
> Third Paragraph. Ditto.
>
> Fourth Paragraph. Your word "directly" is misleading; it

could be construed to mean "at once." Plain clarity is better than ornate obscurity. I note your sensitive marginal remark: "*Rather unkind to French feelings—referring to Moscow.*" Indeed I have not been concerning myself about French feelings, but only about stating the facts. I have said several uncourteous things about the French—calling them a "nation of ingrates" in one place—but you have been so busy editing commas & semicolons that you overlooked them & failed to get scared at them. The next paragraph ends with a slur at the French, but I have reasons for thinking you mistook it for a compliment. It is discouraging to try to penetrate a mind like yours. You ought to get it out & dance on it.

That would take some of the rigidity out of it. And you ought to use it sometimes; that would help. If you had done this every now & then along through life it would not have petrified.

Fifth Paragraph. Thus far I regard this as your masterpiece! You are really perfect in the great art of reducing simple & dignified speech to clumsy & vapid commonplace.

Sixth Paragraph. You have a singularly fine & aristocratic disrespect for homely & unpretending English. Every time I use "go back" you get out your polisher & slick it up to "return." "Return" is suited only to the drawing-room—it is ducal, & says itself with a simper & a smirk.

Seventh Paragraph. "Permission" is ducal. Ducal and affected. "*Her*" great days were *not* "over," they were only half over. Didn't you know that? Haven't you read anything at all about Joan of Arc? The truth is you do not pay any attention; I told you on my very first page that the public part of her career lasted two years, & you have forgotten it already. You really must get your mind out and have it repaired; you see yourself that it is all caked together.

Eighth Paragraph. She "rode away *to* assault & capture a stronghold." Very well; but you do not tell us whether she succeeded or not. You should not worry the reader with uncertainties like that. I will remind you once more that clarity is a good thing in literature. An apprentice cannot do better than keep this useful rule in mind.

Ninth Paragraph. "Known" history. That word has a polish which is too indelicate for me; there doesn't seem to be any sense in it. This would have surprised me last week.

. . . "Breaking a lance" is a knightly & sumptuous phrase, & I honor it for its hoary age & for the faithful service it has done in the prize-composition of the school-girl, but I have ceased from employing it since I got my puberty, & must solemnly object to fathering it here. And, besides, it makes me hint that I have broken one of those things before in honor of the Maid, an intimation not justified by the facts. I did not break any lances or other furniture; I only wrote a book about her.

Truly yours,

MARK TWAIN.

It cost me something to restrain myself and say these smooth & half-flattering things of this immeasurable idiot, but I did it, & have never regretted it. For it is higher & nobler to be kind to even a shad like him than just. . . . I could have said hundreds of unpleasant things about this tadpole, but I did not even feel them.

Yet, in the end, he seems not to have sent the letter. Writing it had served every purpose.

An important publishing event of 1899 was the issue by the American Publishing Company of Mark Twain's "Complete Works in Uniform Edition." Clemens had looked forward to the day when this should be done, perhaps feeling that an assembling of his literary family in symmetrical dress constituted a sort of official recognition of his authorship. Brander Matthews was selected to write the Introduction and prepared a fine "Biographical Criticism," which pleased Clemens, though perhaps he did not entirely agree with its views. Himself of a different cast of mind, he nevertheless admired Matthews.

Writing to Twichell he said:

When you say, "I like Brander Matthews, he impresses me as a man of parts & power," I back you, right up to the hub—I feel the same way. And when you say he has earned your gratitude for cuffing me for my crimes against the Leatherstockings & the Vicar I ain't making any objection. *Dern* your gratitude!

His article is as sound as a nut. Brander knows literature & loves it; he can talk about it & keep his temper; he can state his case so lucidly & so fairly & so forcibly that you have to agree with him even when you *don't* agree with him; & he can discover & praise such merits as a book has even when they are merely half a dozen diamonds scattered through an acre of mud. And so he has a right to be a critic.

To detail just the opposite of the above invoice is to describe me. I haven't any right to criticize books, & I don't do it except when I hate them. I often want to criticize Jane Austen, but her books madden me so that I can't conceal my frenzy from the reader, & therefore I have to stop every time I begin.[1]

Clemens also introduced the "Uniform Edition" with an Author's Preface, the jurisdiction of which, he said, was "restricted to furnishing reasons for the publication of the collection as a whole."

This is not easy to do. Aside from the ordinary commercial reasons I find none that I can offer with dignity. I cannot say without immodesty that the books have merit; I cannot say without immodesty that the public want a "Uniform Edition"; I cannot say without immodesty that a "Uniform Edition" will turn the nation toward high ideals & elevated thought; I cannot say without immodesty that a "Uniform Edition" will eradicate crime, though I think it will. I find no reason that I can offer without immodesty except the rather poor one that I should like to see a "Uniform Edition" myself. It is nothing; a cat could say it about her kittens. Still, I believe I will stand upon that. I have to have a Preface & a reason, by law of custom, & the reason which I am putting forward is at least without offense.

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[1] Once at a dinner given to Matthews, Mark Twain made a speech which consisted almost entirely of intonations of the name "Brander Matthews" to express various shades of human emotion. It would be hopeless, of course, to attempt to convey in print any idea of this effort, which, by those who heard it, is said to have been a masterpiece of vocalization.

CCVIII

MARK TWAIN AND THE WARS

ENGLISH troubles in South Africa came to a head that autumn. On the day when England's ultimatum to the Boers expired Clemens wrote:

> LONDON, 3.07 P.M., *Wednesday, October* 11, 1899. The time is up! Without a doubt the first shot in the war is being fired to-day in South Africa *at this moment. Some* man had to be the first to fall; he has fallen. Whose heart is broken by this murder? For, be he Boer or be he Briton, it is murder, & England committed it by the hand of Chamberlain & the Cabinet, the lackeys of Cecil Rhodes & his Forty Thieves, the South Africa Company.

Mark Twain would naturally sympathize with the Boer—the weaker side, the man defending his home. He knew that for the sake of human progress England must conquer and must be upheld, but his heart was all the other way. In January, 1900, he wrote a characteristic letter to Twichell, which conveys pretty conclusively his sentiments concerning the two wars then in progress.

> DEAR JOE,—Apparently we are not proposing to set the Filipinos free & give their islands to them; & apparently we are not proposing to hang the priests & confiscate their property. If these things are so the war out there has no interest for me.
>
> I have just been examining Chapter LXX of *Following the Equator* to see if the Boer's old military effectiveness is holding out. It reads curiously as if it had been written about the present war.

I believe that in the next chapter my notion of the Boer was rightly conceived. He is popularly called uncivilized; I do not know why. Happiness, food, shelter, clothing, wholesome labor, modest & rational ambitions, honesty, kindliness, hospitality, love of freedom & limitless courage to fight for it, composure & fortitude in time of disaster, patience in time of hardship & privation, absence of noise & brag in time of victory, contentment with humble & peaceful life void of insane excitements—if there is a higher & better form of civilization than this I am not aware of it & do not know where to look for it. I suppose that we have the habit of imagining that a lot of artistic & intellectual & other artificialities must be added or it isn't complete. We & the English have these latter; but as we lack the great bulk of those others I think the Boer civilization is the best of the two. My idea of our civilization is that it is a shoddy, poor thing & full of cruelties, vanities, arrogancies, meannesses, & hypocrisies.

Provided we could get something better in the place of it. But that is not possible perhaps. Poor as it is, it is better than *real* savagery, therefore we must stand by it, extend it, & (in public) praise it. And so we must not utter any hurtful word about England in these days, nor fail to hope that she will win in this war, for her defeat & fall would be an irremediable disaster for the mangy human race. Naturally, then, I am for England; but she is profoundly in the wrong, Joe, & no (instructed) Englishman doubts it. At least that is my belief.

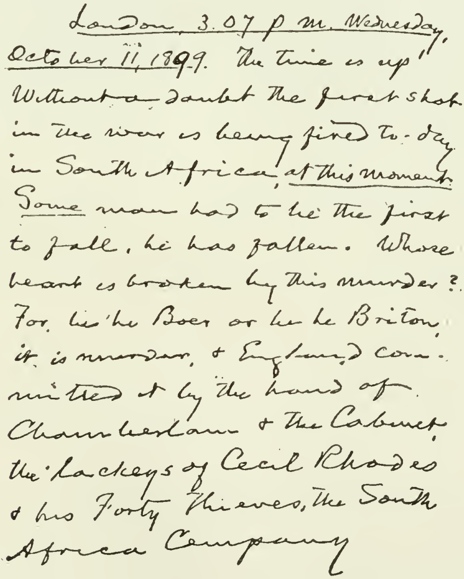
Writing to Howells somewhat later, he calls the conflict in South Africa a "sordid and criminal war," and says that every day he is writing (in his head) bitter magazine articles against it.

But I have to stop with that. Even if wrong—& she is wrong—England must be upheld. He is an enemy of the human race who shall speak against her now. Why *was* the human race created? Or at least why wasn't something creditable created in place of it? . . . I talk the war with both sides—always waiting until the other man introduces the topic. Then I say, "My head is with the Briton, but my heart & such rags of morals as I have are with the Boer—now we will talk, unembarrassed and without prejudice." And so we discuss & have no trouble.

> I notice that God is on both sides in this war; thus history repeats itself. But I am the only person who has noticed this; everybody here thinks He is playing the game for this side, & for this side only.

Clemens wrote one article for anonymous publication in the *Times*. But when the manuscript was ready to mail—in an envelope stamped and addressed to Moberly Bell—he reconsidered and withheld it. It still lies in the envelope with the accompanying letter, which says:

> Don't give me away, whether you print it or not. But I think you ought to print it and get up a squabble, for the weather is just suitable.



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CCIX

PLASMON, AND A NEW MAGAZINE

CLEMENS was not wholly wedded to osteopathy. The financial interest which he had taken in the new milk albumen, "a food for invalids," tended to divide his faith and make him uncertain as to which was to be the chief panacea for all ills—osteopathy or plasmon.

MacAlister, who was deeply interested in the plasmon fortunes, was anxious to get the product adopted by the army. He believed, if he could get an interview with the Medical Director-General, he could convince him of its merits. Discussing the matter with Clemens, the latter said:

"MacAlister, you are going at it from the wrong end. You can't go direct to that man, a perfect stranger, and convince him of anything. Who is his nearest friend?"

MacAlister knew a man on terms of social intimacy with the official.

Clemens said, "That is the man to speak to the Director-General."

"But I don't know him, either," said MacAlister.

"Very good. Do you know any one who does know him?"

"Yes, I know *his* most intimate friend."

"Then he is the man for you to approach. Convince him that plasmon is what the army needs, that the military hospitals are suffering for it. Let him understand that what you want is to get this to the Director-General, and in due time it *will* get to him in the proper way. You'll see."

This proved to be a true prophecy. It was only a little while until the British army had experimented with plasmon and adopted it. MacAlister reported the success of the scheme to Clemens, and out of it grew the story entitled, "Two Little Tales," published in November of the following year (1901) in the *Century Magazine*. Perhaps the reader will remember that in the "Two Little Tales" the Emperor is very ill and the lowest of all his subjects knows a certain remedy, but he cannot seek the Emperor direct, so he wisely approaches him through a series of progressive stages—finally reaching and curing his stricken Majesty.

Clemens had the courage of his investments. He adopted plasmon as his own daily food, and induced various members of the family to take it in its more palatable forms, one of these being a preparation of chocolate. He kept the reading-table by his bed well stocked with a variety of the products and invited various callers to try a complimentary sample lot. It was really an excellent and harmless diet, and both the company and its patients would seem to have prospered—perhaps are prospering still.

There was another business opportunity came along just at this time. S. S. McClure was in England with a proposition for starting a new magazine whose complexion was to be peculiarly American, with Mark Twain as its editor. The magazine was to be called *The Universal*, and by the proposition Clemens was to receive a tenth interest in it for his first year's work, and an added twentieth interest for each of the two succeeding years, with a guarantee that his shares should not earn him less than five thousand dollars the first year, with a proportionate increase as his holdings grew.

The scheme appealed to Clemens, it being understood in the beginning that he was to give very little time to the work, with the privilege of doing it at his home, wherever that might happen to be. He wrote of the matter to Mr. Rogers, explaining in detail, and Rogers replied, approving the plan. Mr. Rogers said he knew that he [Rogers] would have to do most of the work in editing the magazine, and further added:

> One thing I shall insist upon, however, if I have anything to do with the matter, and it is this: that when you have made up your mind on the subject you will stick to it. I have not found in your composition that element of stubbornness which is a constant source of embarrassment to me in all friendly and social ways, but which, when applied to certain lines of business, brings in the dollar and fifty-cent pieces. If you accept the position, of course that means that you have to come to this country. If you do, the yachting will be a success.

There was considerable correspondence with McClure over the new periodical. In one letter Clemens set forth his general views of the matter quite clearly:

> Let us not deceive any one, nor allow any one to deceive himself, if it can be prevented. *This is not to be a comic magazine.* It is to be simply a good, clean, wholesome collection of well-written & enticing literary products, like the other magazines of its class; not setting itself to please but one of man's moods, but all of them. It will not play but one kind of music, but all kinds. I should not be able to edit a comic periodical satisfactorily, for lack of interest in the work. I value humor highly, & am constitutionally fond of it, but I should not like it as a steady diet. For its own best interests, humor should take its outings in grave company; its cheerful dress gets heightened color from the proximity of sober hues. For me to edit a comic magazine would be an incongruity & out of character, for of the twenty-three books which I have written eighteen do not deal in humor as their chiefest feature, but are half & half admixtures of fun & seriousness. I think I have seldom deliberately set out to be humorous, but have nearly always allowed the humor to drop in or stay out, according to its fancy. Although I have many times been asked to write something

> humorous for an editor or a publisher I have had wisdom enough to decline; a person could hardly be humorous with the other man watching him like that. I have never tried to write a humorous lecture; I have only tried to write serious ones—it is the only way not to succeed.
>
> I shall write for this magazine every time the spirit moves me; but I look for my largest entertainment in editing. I have been edited by all kinds of people for more than thirty-eight years; there has always been somebody in authority over my manuscript & privileged to improve it; this has fatigued me a good deal, & I have often longed to move up from the dock to the bench & rest myself and fatigue others. My opportunity is come, but I hope I shall not abuse it overmuch. I mean to do my best to make a good magazine; I mean to do my whole duty, & not shirk any part of it. There are plenty of distinguished artists, novelists, poets, story-tellers, philosophers, scientists, explorers, fighters, hunters, followers of the sea, & seekers of adventure; & with these to do the hard & the valuable part of the work with the pen & the pencil it will be comfort & joy to me to walk the quarter-deck & superintend.

Meanwhile McClure's enthusiasm had had time to adjust itself to certain existing facts. Something more than a month later he wrote from America at considerable length, setting forth the various editorial duties and laying stress upon the feature of intimate physical contact with the magazine. He went into the matter of the printing schedule, the various kinds of paper used, the advertising pages, illustrations—into all the detail, indeed, which a practical managing editor must compass in his daily rounds. It was pretty evident that Clemens would not be able to go sailing about on Mr. Rogers's yacht or live at will in London or New York or Vienna or Elmira, but that he would be more or less harnessed to a revolving chair at an editorial desk, the thing which of all fates he would be most likely to dread. The scheme appears to have died there—the correspondence to have closed.

Somewhat of the inducement in the McClure scheme had been the thought in Clemens's mind that it would bring him back to America. In a letter to Mr. Rogers (January 8, 1900) he said, "I am tired to death of this everlasting exile." Mrs. Clemens often wrote that he was restlessly impatient to return. They were, in fact, constantly discussing the practicability of returning to their own country now and opening the Hartford home. Clemens was ready to do that or to fall in with any plan that would bring him across the water and settle him somewhere permanently. He was tired of the wandering life they had been leading. Besides the long trip of '95 and '96 they had moved two or three times a year regularly since leaving Hartford, nine years before. It seemed to him that they were always packing and unpacking.

"The poor man is willing to live anywhere if we will only let him 'stay put,'" wrote Mrs. Clemens, but he did want to settle in his own land. Mrs. Clemens, too, was weary with wandering, but the Hartford home no longer held any attraction for her. There had been a time when her every letter dwelt on their hope of returning to it. Now the thought filled her with dread. To her sister she wrote:

> Do you think we can live through the first going into the house in Hartford? I feel if we had gotten through the first three months all might be well, but consider the first night.

The thought of the responsibility of that great house —the taking up again of the old life—disheartened her, too. She had added years and she had not gained in health or strength.

> When I was comparatively young I found the burden of that house very great. I don't think I was ever fitted for housekeeping. I dislike the practical part of it so much. I hate it when the servants don't do well, and I hate the correcting them.

Yet no one ever had better discipline in her domestic affairs or ever commanded more devoted service. Her strength of character and the proportions of her achievement show large when we consider this confession.

They planned to return in the spring, but postponed the date for sailing. Jean was still under Kellgren's treatment, and, though a cure had been promised her, progress was discouragingly slow. They began to look about for summer quarters in or near London.

CCX

LONDON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

ALL this time Clemens had been tossing on the London social tide. There was a call for him everywhere. No distinguished visitor of whatever profession or rank but must meet Mark Twain. The King of Sweden was among his royal conquests of that season.

He was more happy with men of his own kind. He was often with Moberly Bell, editor of the *Times;* E. A. Abbey, the painter; Sir Henry Lucy, of *Punch* (Toby, M.P.); James Bryce, and Herbert Gladstone; and there were a number of brilliant Irishmen who were his special delight. Once with Mrs. Clemens he dined with the author of his old favorite, *European Morals*, William E. H. Lecky. Lady Gregory was there and Sir Dennis Fitz-Patrick, who had been Governor-General at Lahore when they were in India, and a number of other Irish ladies and gentlemen. It was a memorable evening. To Twichell Clemens wrote:

> Joe, do you know the Irish gentleman & the Irish lady, the Scotch gentleman & the Scotch lady? These are darlings, every one. Night before last it was all Irish—24. One would have to travel far to match their ease & sociability & animation & sparkle & absence of shyness & self-consciousness. It was American in these fine qualities. This was at Mr. Lecky's. He is Irish, you know. Last night it was Irish again, at Lady Gregory's. Lord Roberts is Irish, & Sir William Butler, & Kitchener, I think, & a disproportion of the other prominent generals are of Irish & Scotch breed—keeping up the traditions of Wellington & Sir Colin Campbell, of the Mutiny. You will

have noticed that in S. A., as in the Mutiny, it is usually the Irish & Scotch that are placed in the forefront of the battle. . . . Sir William Butler said, "the Celt is the spearhead of the British lance."

He mentions the news from the African war, which had been favorable to England, and what a change had come over everything in consequence. The dinner-parties had been lodges of sorrow and depressing. Now everybody was smiling again. In a note-book entry of this time he wrote:

> Relief of Mafeking (May 18, 1900). The news came at 9.17 P.M. Before 10 all London was in the streets, gone mad with joy. By then the news was all over the American continent.

Clemens had been talking copyright a good deal in London, and introducing it into his speeches. Finally, one day he was summoned before a committee of the House of Lords to explain his views. His old idea that the product of a man's brain is his property in perpetuity and not for any term of years had not changed, and they permitted him to dilate on this (to them) curious doctrine. The committee consisted of Lords Monkswell, Knutsford, Avebury, Farrar, and Thwing. When they asked for his views he said:

"In my opinion the copyright laws of England and America need only the removal of the forty-two-year limit and the return to perpetual copyright to be perfect. I consider that at least one of the reasons advanced in justification of limited copyright is fallacious — namely, the one which makes a distinction between an author's property and real estate, and pretends that the two are not created, produced, or acquired in the same way, thus warranting a different treatment of the two by law."

Continuing, he dwelt on the ancient doctrine that there was no property in an idea, showing how the far greater proportion of all property consisted of nothing more than elaborated ideas—the steamship, locomotive, telephone, the vast buildings in the world, how all of these had been constructed upon a basic idea precisely as a book is constructed, and were property only as a book is property, and therefore rightly subject to the same laws. He was carefully and searchingly examined by that shrewd committee. He kept them entertained and interested and left them in good-nature, even if not entirely converted. The papers printed his remarks, and London found them amusing.

A few days after the copyright session, Clemens, responding to the toast, "Literature," at the Royal Literary Fund Banquet, made London laugh again, and early in June he was at the Savoy Hotel welcoming Sir Henry Irving back to England after one of his successful American tours.

On the Fourth of July (1900) Clemens dined with the Lord Chief-Justice, and later attended an American banquet at the Hotel Cecil. He arrived late, when a number of the guests were already going. They insisted, however, that he make a speech, which he did, and considered the evening ended. It was not quite over. A sequel to his "Luck" story, published nine years before, suddenly developed.

To go back a little, the reader may recall that "Luck" was a story which Twichell had told him as being supposedly true. The hero of it was a military officer who had risen to the highest rank through what at least seemed to be sheer luck, including a number of fortunate blunders. Clemens thought the story improbable, but wrote it and laid it away for several years, offering it at last in the general house-cleaning which took place after the first collapse of the machine. It was published in *Harper's Magazine* for August, 1891, and something less than a year later, in Rome, an English gentleman—a new acquaintance—said to him:

"Mr. Clemens, shall you go to England?"

"Very likely."

"Shall you take your tomahawk with you?"

"Why—yes, if it shall seem best."

"Well, it will. Be advised. Take it with you."

"Why?"

"Because of that sketch of yours entitled 'Luck.' That sketch is current in England, and you will surely need your tomahawk."

"What makes you think so?"

"I think so because the hero of the sketch will naturally want your scalp, and will probably apply for it. Be advised. Take your tomahawk along."

"Why, even with it I sha'n't stand any chance, because I sha'n't know him when he applies, and he will have my scalp before I know what his errand is."

"Come, do you mean to say that you don't know who the hero of that sketch is?"

"Indeed I haven't any idea who the hero of the sketch is. Who is it?"

His informant hesitated a moment, then named a name of world-wide military significance.

As Mark Twain finished his Fourth of July speech at the Cecil and started to sit down a splendidly uniformed and decorated personage at his side said:

"Mr. Clemens, I have been wanting to know you a long time," and he was looking down into the face of the hero of "Luck."

"I was caught unprepared," he said in his notes of it. "I didn't sit down—I fell down. I didn't have my tomahawk, and I didn't know what would happen. But he was composed, and pretty soon I got composed and we had a good, friendly time. If he had ever heard of that sketch of mine he did not manifest it in any way, and at twelve, midnight, I took my scalp home intact."

CCXI

DOLLIS HILL AND HOME

IT was early in July, 1900, that they removed to Dollis Hill House, a beautiful old residence surrounded by trees on a peaceful hilltop, just outside of London. It was literally within a stone's-throw of the city limits, yet it was quite rural, for the city had not overgrown it then, and it retained all its pastoral features—a pond with lily-pads, the spreading oaks, the wide spaces of grassy lawn. Gladstone, an intimate friend of the owner, had made it a favorite retreat at one period of his life, and the place to-day is converted into a public garden called Gladstone Park. The old English diplomat used to drive out and sit in the shade of the trees and read and talk and translate Homer, and pace the lawn as he planned diplomacy, and, in effect, govern the English empire from that retired spot.

Clemens, in some memoranda made at the moment, doubts if Gladstone was always at peace in his mind in this retirement.

"Was he always really tranquil within," he says, "or was he only externally so—for effect? We cannot know; we only know that his rustic bench under his favorite oak has no bark on its arms. Facts like this speak louder than words."

The red-brick residential wave of London was still some distance away in 1900. Clemens says:

> The rolling sea of green grass still stretches away on every hand, splotches with shadows of spreading oaks in whose

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MARK TWAIN AT DOLLIS HILL

> black coolness flocks of sheep lie peacefully dreaming. Dreaming of what? That they are in London, the metropolis of the world, Post-office District, N. W.? Indeed no. They are not aware of it. I am aware of it, but that is all. It is not possible to realize it. For there is no suggestion of city here; it is country, pure & simple, & as still & reposeful as is the bottom of the sea.

They all loved Dollis Hill. Mrs. Clemens wrote as if she would like to remain forever in that secluded spot.

> It is simply divinely beautiful & peaceful; . . . the great old trees are beyond everything. I believe nowhere in the world do you find such trees as in England. . . . Jean has a hammock swung between two such great trees, & on the other side of a little pond, which is *full* of white & yellow pond-lilies, there is tall grass & trees & Clara & Jean go there in the afternoons, spread down a rug on the grass in the shade & read & sleep.

They all spent most of their time outdoors at Dollis Hill under those spreading trees.

Clemens to Twichell in midsummer wrote:

> I am the only person who is ever in the house in the daytime, but I am working & deep in the luxury of it. But there is one tremendous defect. Livy is all so enchanted with the place & so in love with it that she doesn't know how she is going to tear herself away from it.

Much company came to them at Dollis Hill. Friends drove out from London, and friends from America came often among them—the Sages, Prof. Willard Fiske, and Brander Matthews with his family. Such callers were served with tea and refreshment on the lawn, and lingered, talking and talking, while the sun got lower and the shadows lengthened, reluctant to leave that idyllic spot.

"Dollis Hill comes nearer to being a paradise than any other home I ever occupied," he wrote when the summer was about over.

But there was still a greater attraction than Dollis Hill. Toward the end of summer they willingly left that paradise, for they had decided at last to make that home-returning voyage which had invited them so long. They were all eager enough to go—Clemens more eager than the rest, though he felt a certain sadness, too, in leaving the tranquil spot which in a brief summer they had so learned to love.

Writing to W. H. Helm, a London newspaper man who had spent pleasant hours with him chatting in the shade, he said:

> . . . The packing & fussing & arranging have begun, for the removal to America &, by consequence, the peace of life is marred & its contents & satisfactions are departing. There is not much choice between a removal & a funeral; in fact, a removal is a funeral, substantially, & I am tired of attending them.

They closed Dollis Hill, spent a few days at Brown's Hotel, and sailed for America on the *Minnehaha*, October 6, 1900, bidding, as Clemens believed, and hoped, a permanent good-by to foreign travel. They reached New York on the 15th, triumphantly welcomed after their long nine years of wandering. How glad Mark Twain was to get home may be judged from his remark to one of the many reporters who greeted him.

"If I ever get ashore I am going to break both of my legs so I can't get away again."

END OF VOLUME II.